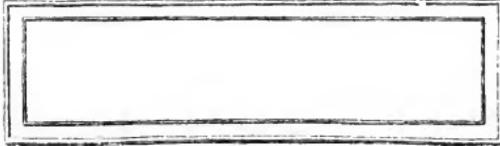


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CINCINNATI, OHIO

Vol. XVII, 1922, Nos. 1 and 2
JANUARY-JUNE



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Memoirs of Benjamin Van Cleve

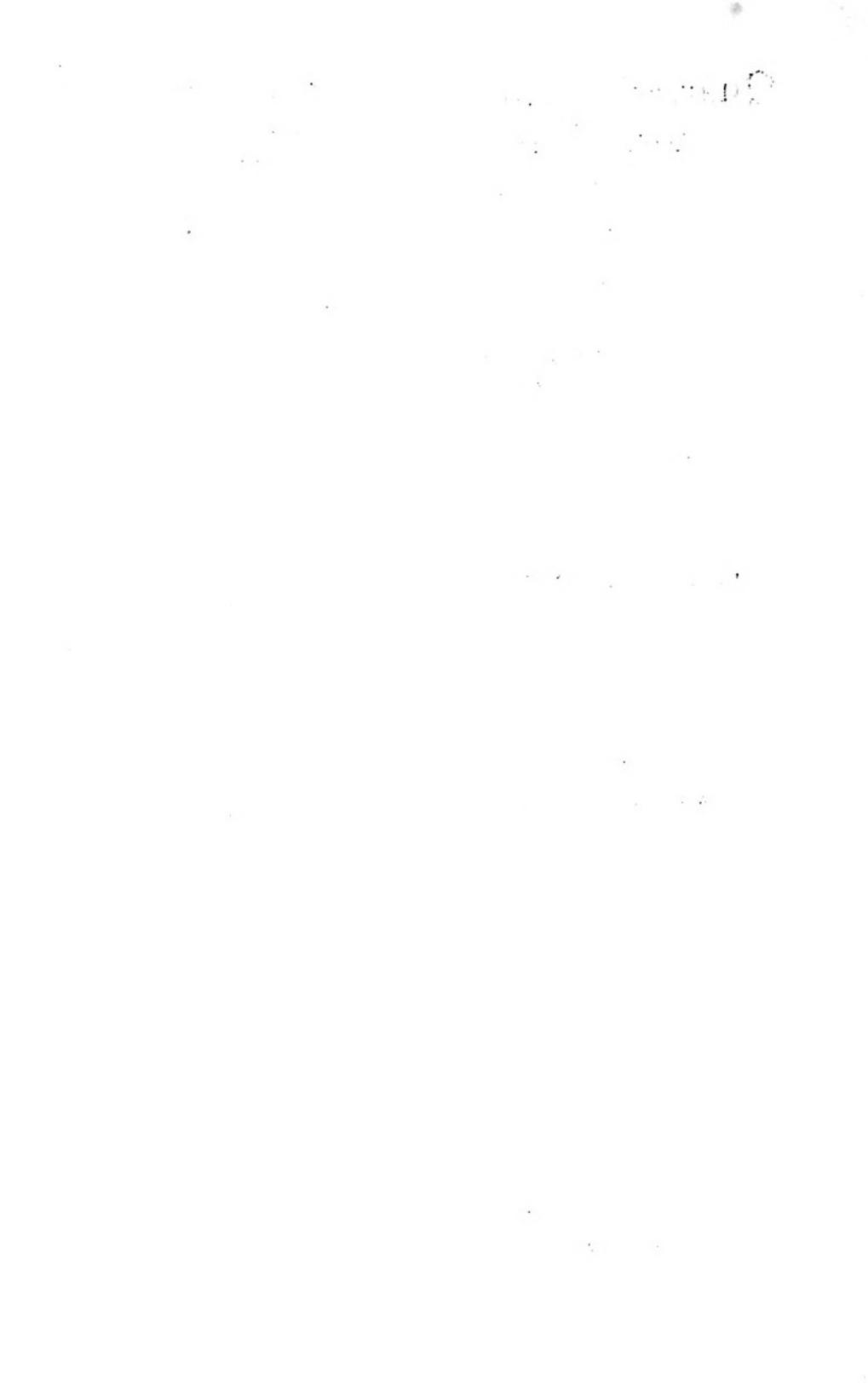
Edited by

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CINCINNATI

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FOREWORD

A baffling problem that confronts the historian of pioneer Ohio is to catch the actual point of view of the hardy pioneers and to gain an insight into their daily lives. Judge Burnet's Notes give a valuable analysis of early politics, Hildreth and McBride have accumulated many interesting details of pioneer life in the Ohio Valley, and travellers, notably Fortescue Cuming, have left fleeting glimpses of the people and their customs. But to round out the picture there is need for the plain narratives of men from the great silent mass which so deeply and surely laid here the basis of American life. In this last category of records may be classed the Memoirs of Benjamin Van Cleve.

The antecedents of the author of the Memoirs are typical of so many of the settlers in the early West. His forbears, coming from the Rhine in the middle of the seventeenth century, settled on Long Island, later moving to Monmouth County, New Jersey, where Benjamin Van Cleve was born in 1773. From their New Jersey home many of the Van Cleves followed the urge westward. One branch, settling first in North Carolina, soon pushed on to Kentucky, and became identified with the historic Boone family. Another branch, which included the author of the Memoirs, migrated to Washington County, Pennsylvania, and later to the Ohio country, where again this vigorous stock took firm root, numbering among its offsprings Orville and Wilbur Wright. The hardiness, the persistence and the practical sense of this pioneering family is illustrated in Benjamin Van Cleve, and it is these qualities, so strongly reflected in the pages of his Memoirs, that give to them their greatest value as the record of a pioneer settler.

In the Memoirs there is a lively narrative of the more colorful episodes in Benjamin Van Cleve's life. His earliest recollections were of the stirring Revolutionary days in New Jersey. The next striking event was the westward migration of his family in 1785 to Washington County, Pennsylvania. After a five years' halt in this then frontier district, in 1789 the Van Cleve family

went on down the Ohio, arriving at Cincinnati January 3, 1790, scarcely a year after the planting of the settlement. There John Van Cleve, Benjamin's father, set up a blacksmith shop, and there, a little more than a year later, he was killed by the Indians who at that time were an ever present menace to this American outpost.

Benjamin Van Cleve, a boy of eighteen equipped with only a scanty education, now became the chief support of his widowed mother and her three younger children. As Fort Washington was the headquarters for the expeditions against the Indians, the supply of the troops furnished occupation for many of the inhabitants of Cincinnati. To this means of livelihood Van Cleve soon turned, entering the employ of his uncle, Robert Benham, a well known army contractor. In this capacity Van Cleve took part in St. Clair's historic expedition, and followed General Wayne in 1794 to the new posts at Fort Greenville and at Fort Wayne. Meanwhile, in the same service he had accompanied the troops sent to the lower Ohio, in 1794, to re-establish the old French post at Fort Massac. An interesting incident sandwiched in between this work with army contractors, was Van Cleve's mission in 1792, as military courier with important despatches from Colonel Hodgdon, quartermaster general at Fort Washington, to Philadelphia. After peace was made with the Indians in 1795, the supply of the army no longer furnished employment, and Van Cleve, in characteristically practical fashion, turned to such other available occupations as his limited education made possible. In varied roles, as clerk in the Hamilton County court house, and as assistant surveyor in the employ of the proprietors of Dayton, he managed to secure a rather precarious livelihood.

The opening up of the interior after the Treaty of Greenville gave prospects of greater prosperity in a newer settlement, and Benjamin Van Cleve was a member of the first party of pioneers that landed at Dayton April 1, 1796. At first his hopes were not fulfilled. Farming in early Dayton realized such scanty returns that in the winter of 1798 he was back in Cincinnati, this time engaged in the study of surveying. In a short time he was appointed surveyor for Hamilton County, and within the next two or three years, from his home at Dayton as headquarters, he made many surveying trips through the nearby districts. Also, for the three sessions of the Territorial Legislature, 1799, 1800 and 1801, he acted as assistant to John Reily, the clerk of

1821

the House of Representatives. The Memoirs end with a rather brief entry for 1802, and this is fitting, for from this time until his death, November 29, 1831, Benjamin Van Cleve led the placid life of a prosperous, public spirited and respected citizen of Dayton. But the cultivation of his quarter section near Dayton was not a sufficiently absorbing occupation, and the long list of his varied activities during this period reflect his untiring energy. As an incorporator of the Dayton Social Library Society and of the Dayton Academy, as a director of the first bank in Dayton, and as trustee of Ohio University, Benjamin Van Cleve served well the pioneer community in which he had found prosperity, and in practical fashion did his bit in the great American task of establishing civilization in the midst of the wilderness.

Always the Memoirs of a man who has lived a full and varied life possess importance as a human document, and especially is this value present in these pages by Benjamin Van Cleve. As the author himself tells us, the Memoirs were based upon a diary which he had been accustomed to keep from early life, and consequently the narrative is remarkably accurate in details. Internal evidence shows that the work of transcribing the original diary was done in 1820, a year before the author's death. His purpose was merely to write down the more interesting experiences of his life for the benefit of his own family. This lack of any purpose of self exaltation or of an appeal to a wide-spread audience, only accentuates the value of the Memoirs. Moreover, their clear and direct style has a ring of sincerity that compels the respect of the reader for a broad-minded, vigorous and self-made man.

Aside from their personal and literary interest, the greatest value of the Van Cleve Memoirs lies in the descriptions of pioneer life and travel, covering as the narrative does so wide a sweep of territory. The early trails across Pennsylvania to the Ohio Valley, the trip down the Ohio to Cincinnati, the perilous voyage from Cincinnati to Fort Massac, and the Wilderness Road are among the topics that are described in detail and with a wealth of intelligent comment. Equally illuminating is the insight given into the practical measures at this time to secure supplies for the Western troops, and the extent to which Kentucky was called upon to furnish salt and horses as well as men. The touches of camp life, too, are well done. Still other important sections of the Memoirs treat of pioneer life in Cincinnati and Dayton, record the difficulties of early surveyors, or

afford valuable sidelights upon Ohio politics in the troubled period, 1799-1802.

The manuscript, written in a clear hand that is still legible, comprises a volume of about $6\frac{3}{4}$ by 8 inches and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick, substantially bound in sheepskin. Beside the Memoirs the volume contains five appendices, of which "Note A" has proved useful in affording material for footnotes with regard to the Van Cleve family. The other appendices include official accounts of St. Clair's and of Wayne's campaigns, a long and not especially noteworthy draft of a proposed constitution for Ohio, and a lengthy digest of notes with regard to the Northwest Territory. Although these last four appendices illustrate the author's interest in historical and political subjects, they are not of sufficient original value to warrant printing. Benjamin Van Cleve bequeathed the Memoirs to his only son, John W. Van Cleve, who, like his father, was an exceedingly influential and public spirited citizen of Dayton. John W. Van Cleve was keenly interested in the early history of Ohio, and sent a part of his father's memoirs to the *American Pioneer*. Although these printed extracts (see notes, *passim*) omit many of the most important passages in the Memoirs, they have been widely used by writers on the pioneer history of the Ohio Valley. From John W. Van Cleve the Memoirs descended to his nephew, Thomas Dover, son of Henrietta Van Cleve. Thomas Dover in turn left them to his daughter, Mrs. Anna Dover McKnight, of Dayton, in whose possession the manuscript is at present. A typewritten copy with the appendices has been deposited in the Dayton Public Library, but the following pages comprise the only printed copy of the entire Memoirs that is known to have been made.

The printing of this very valuable manuscript was made possible by the public spirit of Mrs. McKnight, whose purpose it is to make available to the student of the early West this narrative of the experiences and travels of her ancestor, Benjamin Van Cleve.

Beverley W. Bond, Jr.

MEMOIRS OF BENJAMIN VAN CLEVE

INTRODUCTION

Having been in the habit from my early youth of keeping memoranda of the cheif incidents and occurrences of my life, I have thrown them together in the following pages, in the form of memoirs: occasionally noting passing events connected with the different periods; for the benefit of retrospection, & for the gratification & perhaps advantage of my children: answering the double purpose of affording them a history of my life and a cronological table to the history of the times; or to so much of them, at least, as I have been a spectator to, or in which I have been an actor.

The narrative is presented with the views I entertained at the time, & my conclusions may often be found erronious; but we derive advantage as often perhaps from the errors, as from the approved maxims of others.

In my private duties as well as public I have always found it necessary to form rules for my conduct, & resolutions to adhere strictly to the rules. My main object has ever been to be useful in the sphere in which my Creator has been pleased to place me. I cannot be useful unless I am active—I ought therefore never to procrastinate anything until tomorrow that can be done today—& a small private sacrifice should never be an obstacle, where much public good can be rendred.— In my official duties my maxims have been 1. to have a place for everything & everything in its place. 2. To make my duty my study & determine what it is, & what it is not. 3. To fulfill what I conscientiously believe to be my duty without hesitation; fear, favor or affection— The advice of a friend is never to be slighted, but every man ought to be the best judge of his own business and his own interest and duty. No friend or monitor is as near, as indefatigable, as interested in my conduct as my own heart— Its lively dictates will ever afford me the most pleasing sensations, and obeying them the most cheering

consolations. 4. To have system or classification of business, to do everything in its turn to finish one before I begin another item or class; at the same time to accomodate all persons as far as practicable. To omit nothing necessary to be done, at the same time to study brevity and avoid everything superfluous or unnecessary.

My opportunities for improvement by education have been very limited. I have never attended to the study of Grammar and I have not herein attempted to embellish my narrative by rhetorical figures attempting only a plain statement of facts. & tho' I am sensible that in the construction of my sentences they are not calculated to meet the public eye, or bear criticism, I trust in their connexion they will seldom be misunderstood.

MEMOIRS &c.

My ancestors at a very remote period (as I have understood from some of them) migrated from the City of Cleves or dutchy of Cleef on the river Rhine in Germany & circle of Westphalia now under the dominion of the king of Prussia from whence we take our name *Van* or *Von* signifying *from* or *of* in low dutch language. Some of my family spell their name Van Cleef & others Van Cleve. If the name be derived from a title the former must be correct. If otherwise either may be right. They came from Amsterdam in Holland & settled at Flatbush in Long island, when the New Netherlands belonged to the Dutch. My Great Grandfather Van Cleve lived on Staten Island My Great Grandfather Benham about the year 1717 left his relatives at Flatbush and settled near Monmouth Court house in New Jersey a few years after—my Grandfather Benjamin Van Cleve & his brothers & sisters all settled in Jersey chiefly in and near New Brunswick—when my father was two years old he moved & settled in Monmouth County—this was about the year 1751 My father married here & here I was born on the 24th of February 1773. I was named for my Grandfather. The family which was at this time numerous & spread throughout several counties in New Jersey could in almost every house belonging to the name produce a Benjamin, John & William, sometimes more than one and generally an Aaron a Cornelius Rulif (in English Ralph) & Tunis.

I was the eldest of four sons & five daughters of which two

boys & one girl died in infancy. The earliest occurrence of any importance that I can recollect was the battle of Monmouth on the 28th of June 1778.¹ I was then past five years old and can remember the confusion of the women & children & their flight to the pine swamps. When we had got a mile from home the British army were in sight at a mile & a half distant. We proceeded a short distance further & held a consultation about the course to pursue. The men having gone in search of our army I gave them the slip & aimed to return home, got within a short distance of the British right flank and the sound of the Bugles drove me back where in the confusion I had not been missed. The next day my father & his brothers acted as guides to seperate companies of Col. Morgans riflemen & reconnoitered the British right flank took a number of prisoners & took & recaptured a great deal of property. Morgan did not participate in the engagement & kept his men under arms (where our women were gathered) during the Battle, waiting orders.

The firing even of the smaller arms was distinctly heard where we were & the fortune of the day anticipated from the advancing or receding of the sound Our army retreated after the commencement of the action & after some time drove the enemy in turn The retreat of the enemy was made with precipitancy under cover of the night to Sandy hook. A lively interest was discovered in the corps commanded by Col. Morgan —when our army was retreating many of the men melted to tears—when it was advancing there was every demonstration of joy & exultation How different is a band of patriots fighting for their lives their liberties their all from mercenary troops!

The day of the Battle was believed to be as hot a day as ever was felt in the New Jersey. On the retreat of the enemy the inhabitants returned & found with few exceptions the buildings for some distance around in our neighborhood burnt the naked chimneys standing, great part of the trees in some orchards cut down the woods burnt & property that had been hid destroyed or carried away, the earth strewed with dead carcases sufficient to have produced a pestilence My father had neither a shelter for his family, nor bread for them, nor clothes to cover them save what we had on. He saved a bed & looking glass only which we carried with us—a yearling heifer had escaped the

¹ This description of the Battle of Monmouth is an excellent example of the author's accuracy in details. Cf. Fiske, *American Revolution*, II, 59-66; Greene, *Revolutionary War*, pp. 144-7.

enemy & a sow whose back was broken with a sword lived & his anvil I believe remained among the rubbish & ruins of the shop Several waggons & an Artillery carriage were burnt at the Shop, but the piece of Artillery was thrown into a hole of muddy water in the middle of the road & was not found by the enemy.

The British & Refugees² continued to commit depredations in our neighborhood from this time til the end of the war It was only 20 miles to Sandy hook & several other points on the Sea Coast—parties of them could reach us & return in a night Some of our neighbours within a miles distance were taken prisoners & conveyed to the Sugar house & prison ships at New York One died in the Sugar house whose family lived within 300 yards of us & who was taken at a neighbours a mile off These circumstances made it necessary that the Militia should be in almost constant service & my father was from home on this service a great part of his time & he was in some skirmishes with the Tories He was also under General Forman in the Battle of Germantown

The peace between America & Great Britain was concluded in 1783 & my father then lived on the same ground where he did at the commencement of the war. Ralph Van Cleve youngest son of Aaron Van Cleve of North Carolina Cousin to my father & about the same age had been educated at Princeton College & married in New Jersey He had formed a close intimacy with my father whilst pursuing his studies their wives had also been in habits of more than ordinary intimacy. A correspondence subsisted between them & He endeavoured to prevail on my father to remove to Carolina³ My father was strongly incline[d] to go there; but having never been much from home the length of the journey & difficulty of making the necessary arrangements with his ignorance about the business were insurmountable obstacles At length Capt Robert Benham my mothers brother (whose father had removed many years before to Loudon County in Virginia & he had followed him thither from whence he became one of the first adventurers & setlers on

² "The Continental inhabitants that took part with the enemy and fled to them for refuge were called by us Refugees or Tories & by the British, Loyalists." Van Cleve's note in Ms. Memoirs.

³ Aaron Van Cleve moved to Rowan Co., N. C., where his daughter married Squire Boone, brother of Daniel Boone. Aaron Van Cleve's sons moved later to Kentucky, *Note A of MSS.; Filson Club Publications, No. 16, p. 107; Thwaites, Daniel Boone, 6-7.*

the west of the Monongehela in Pennsylvania) paid us a visit He strongly solicited my father to remove to that Country gave him a list of the different places on the road & every necessary advice relative to his preparation & journey The object being marked out so plain more than half of the difficulty seemed to be surmounted He was however all summer getting ready & did not commence his journey until the second day of November It seemed hard to leave the Country of our nativity our near relatives & almost all that was dear to us My fathers mother was living & had lived with us for many years. My mothers grandmother who had brought her up from two years old lived within a quarter of a mile. She had never lived farther off. There was a numerous connection on both sides. We were now to seperate from them forever But the prospect of being better enabled in a new Country of providing for a growing family preponderated.

We commenced our journey on the second of November 1785 with two waggons of my fathers, one carrying a set of Smiths tools & the other household goods in company with Cornelius Shourd & family whose wife is my mothers sister—they were in another waggon—my father & uncle had each an apprentice & a young man by the name of Tunis Voorheis a neighbor came with us to see the Country and my uncle had with him likewise my uncle Richard Benhams wife & son. We travelled this day near 30 miles & put up at the Ferry on the Delaware river about two miles below Trenton.

Nov 3 Came to Isaac Wynkoops his wife is my fathers sister He lives in Montgomery County Pennsylvania three miles from the Crooked billet & sixteen from Philadelphia having travelled 17 miles this day.

Nov 4. We remained at my uncles

Nov 5 Came by the Crooked billet, and sign of the broad axe & encamped near the Sweeds ford on Schuylkill.⁴

Nov. 6. Sunday—We crossed Schuylkill & came in to the Lancaster road, near 32 miles from Philadelphia & encamped near the 38 mile stone.

Nov. 7. Came thro' Downingstown, crossed Brandywine Creek & encamped the third time in our wagon. The roads are getting very bad, which must be expected at this season.

Nov. 8. Crossed Millstone Creek & came within five or six miles of Lancaster.

⁴ Swede's Ford is within the present town of Bridgeport, Penn.

Nov. 9. Crossed Canastoga Creek, came thro' Lancaster & encamped within two miles of Susquehanna.⁵

Nov. 10. We crossed the Susquehanna at Wrights Ferry (The Susquehanna bridge has been thrown across here since, & the handsome town of Columbia built on the Eastern side of the river at this place) came also through York & lodged a mile from town

Nov. 11. Passed through Abbots Town & encamped about 8 miles further on

Nov. 12. Came over Marsh Creek & encamped in our wagons

Nov. 13. Sunday. Travelled across the South mountain which is about ten miles across & encamped near Antetum [Antietam] Creek

Nov. 14. Came through Greencastle & over Great Conococheague Creek & encamped

Nov. 15. Crossed Little Conococheague Creek at James McDowell's mill & encamped

Nov. 16. Crossed the North mountain & came to Mr James Shields' near Fort Littleton & got pasture for our horses at four pence per head which is the usual price. This mountain produces the greatest variety of timber of any place I have seen. We had rain to day which increases our difficulties. The roads are very bad.

Nov. 17. Tarryed to repair our wagons. The women employed in cooking & baking.

Nov. 18. Froze considerably last night. The roads fill'd with ice. Came this day to Mr Mays on Sideling hill. The house so crowded with travellers that notwithstanding the cold we were obliged to encamp in the woods. The horses & men very much fatigued having spent near half of the day in getting up the hill which was steep and stony & winding round backward & forward; to gain the summit we had to put six horses to a wagon & bring up one at a time

⁵ Later emigrants bound westward followed the Pennsylvania State Road from Lancaster via Carlisle and Chambersburg. The Van Cleve party travelled over a more direct route through York, Abbottstown and Greencastle, probably coming into the State Road at McDowell's Mill on Little Conococheahque Creek. Four miles west of Bedford, the road divided, one branch going directly to Pittsburgh, the other to Beesontown (Uniontown) and Washington County. The Van Cleves followed the latter road. Cf. Hulbert, *Historic Highways*, vol. 5, pp. 102+.

Nov. 19. The ice so thick as to bear a man & routes deep
The cold continues & the women & children suffer very much
The teams almost exhausted Came down Rays hill lashing
Trees to our wagons & four miles further encamped at Esq.
Martins at the crossings of Juniatta—began to snow this day

Nov 20 Sunday Mr Shourd bought half of a deer & divided
with us This was the first Venison I had ever tasted—we came
this day to Bloody run & encamped.

Nov 21. Travelled this day up the Juniatta river between
mountains; in some places there is only room between them for
the river & road the Cliffs almost projecting over us. Crossed
the river five times came through Bedford & to Todds tavern
Snowed fast this day.

Nov. 22. This day tolerable clear Crossed Juniatta the
7th & 8th times & came five miles on to the twelve mile ridge

Nov. 23. Came over the ridge & half way over Duck moun-
tain which is seven miles from one foot to the other—Snowing
fast. We encamped in the woods.

Nov 24 We came over Duck mountain & to Alegheny at a
Mr Spikers & had good entertainment

Nov 25 Snowed fast all day—the snow collecting in balls
under the horses feet makes it difficult in ascending these moun-
tains Came within 8 miles of Laurel Hill & received good enter-
tainment

Nov 26 Snowed nearly all day, our best wagon broke down
The Glade road remarkably bad We stuck sometimes twice or
three times within a mile Spent the day in endeavoring to get
the wagon mended without being able to effect it, & was finally
obliged to leave it with the Smiths tools & proceed with the
other

Nov 27 Sunday Came out of the Glades & seven or eight
miles on Laurel Hill & encamped Snowing fast & the Snow
about six inches deep

Nov 28 Continues Snowing, broke one of the Axletrees of
our remaining wagon & came to the foot of Laurel Hill to Martin
Overly's where we expected to get it mended

Nov 29 Remained here & got our waggon repaired—These
mountains which are about 60 miles across are generally called
at a distance “the Aleganey Mountains” They are generally
well timbered—present at once a majestic but dreary appear-
ance The roads being only opened sufficient for wagons to
pass, neither dug nor levelled, winding in the assent & descent

to take advantage of the steeps, there is constant danger of upsetting To undertake crossing with loaded wagons requires a considerable degree of resolution & fortitude

Nov 30 Came over Chestnut ridge by Cherry's mill & two miles further to a Mr Warum's

Dec. 1. Came to Mrs. Rachel Mounts' Widow of Col. Providence Mounts near the Broad ford on Yohiogeny [Youghiogheny] bot some Corn of her & she refused pay for the pasture & hay for our horses.

Dec 2. Crossed Yohiogeny at the Broad ford & came to Mr Thomas Rogers'

Dec 3. Came to Mr Porters over Redstone Creek within a mile of Beeson town (now Union)

Dec 4. Sunday Came through Beesontown & about eight miles further & was entertained at a Mr. Findlays who appeared to be a very worthy religious man

Dec 5 Came eight or nine miles to a Mr Halls & within one mile of the Monongahela

Dec 6 Came to Mr James Crawfords ferry on the Monongahela,⁶ here we were met by my uncles Robert & Peter Benham with fresh horses & before night we arrived at the end of our journey on the North fork of Ten mile Creek in Washington County Pennsylvania There were no roads properly opened after we left York County⁷

We lived on the plantation of my uncle Robert Benham nearly opposite Wises (afterwards Wallaces) mills during the years 1786 & 7. My father cultivated a small field & worked at his trade

In 1788 my father rented a farm of Thomas Nichol on the road leading from Washington to the head of Ten mile one & a half miles from Washington (then Generally called Catfish & in writings Catfishes Camp an Indian of that name having lived there a few years before) The neighborhood in which we lived on Ten mile was composed mostly of Germans⁸ They were an industrious people, cautious of strangers—my uncles however were old settlers & Robert had great influence with them,

⁶ James Crawford's Ferry was at the mouth of Fish Pot Run, a short distance above Redstone (Brownsville). Crumrine, *Hist. of Washington Co., p. 766.*

⁷ Compare the conditions of the road at this time, and in July, 1792, p. 39.

⁸ This settlement was probably in Amwell, Tp., Washington Co., Crumrine, *Washington Co., pp. 659-60.*

they consulted him in all their difficulties & this perhaps served to introduce us & give them confidence sooner in us We found them indeed very friendly They knew, nor cared nothing about politicks They were honest & attended regularly on the Sabbath at public worship The meetings were usually held at Wises where they generally brought a bag of grain & after sermon took one of meal home—they likewise brought leather & other articles & saved numerous errands which otherwise would occupy much of their time within the week The minister made horn combs & it was said he generally had his pockets full to sell on these occasions It is probable they were previously bespoke The population around us near Washington was of Irish emigrants⁹ of the poorer class mostly tenants, rather indolent capricious & changeable but generally very friendly & hospitable fond of liquor & litigation They were very rigid in the observance of the Sabbath which with the forms of family worship kept up by some of them was all that appeared to them necessary to form the Christian character They were also great politicians Their fences & buildings were bad in the extreme & as a natural consequence their beasts were breachy & unruly Their crops were mostly destroyed their beasts dogged & maimed litigation ensued & thus poverty was a continual attendant. Sometimes he that was most injured was rendered most unguarded by passion & if he vented an unusual load of curses & imprecations the other by threatning to tell Mr. Henderson who was the seeder minister at some distance, might effect a compromise & reconciliation & thereby prevent a suit at law Our farm however happened to be under good fences & we kept our beasts within the enclosures We had therefore no difficulty but lived in great harmony with all our neighbours We found them always cheerful & merry notwithstanding their poverty & very friendly toward us, In Washington at this time there was about three stores viz Blakeny Cunningham & Methirks & two Taverns kept by Dod & Wilson,—public offices & mechanicks in proportion During this & the preceding two years the main County roads were surveyed & opened. I think the first paper printed West of the mountains was printed at Pittsburgh by Scull & Boyd after we arrived & about this time or perhaps shortly after Colerick Hunter & Beaumont commenced printing

⁹ Doubtless the allusion is to Scotch-Irish rather than Irish. The location seems to have been in Morris Tp., Crumrine, *Washington Co.*, pp. 844-45.

a paper at Washington¹⁰ The popular strife between Breckenridge & Findley was going on at this time which produced the first papers of Breckenridges Modern Chivalry.¹¹

In 1789 my father removed to the Monongehela near James Crawfords ferry. This year John Cleves Symmes some families & persons from New Jersey & this Country descended the Ohio to the Miami Country & my father cultivated a small place worked some at his trade & built a boat & made preparations to go down the river with the first swell of the water.¹²

On the 25 December 1789 We sailed from Crawfords ferry our boat carrying the families of my father & uncle Richard Benham & some passengers one of whom was a Jacob Tappan from New Jersey Our boat proved staunch & we met with no accident except running on a sandbar in the middle of the Ohio a little below Pittsburgh where we lay about 20 hours when the waters rising carried us off We drifted nights as well as days, passed Governor St. Clairs Schooner off the mouth of Muskingum which passed us again on New Years morning before day near the mouth of the Scioto I think the only settlements between Wheeling & the Miami were small ones at Marietta Bellpre Bellville Gallipolis¹³ Maysville & a small stockade at the mouth of Bracken We landed at Losantiville opposite the mouth of Licking river on the 3rd day of January 1790 Two small hewed log houses had been erected & several cabbins General Harmar was employed in building Fort Washington & Commanded Strong Pratts Kerseys & Kingsburys companies of Infantry & Fords artillery—a few days after this Governor St. Clair appointed officers Civil & military for the Miami Country His proclamation erecting the County of Hamilton bears the date

¹⁰ Cf. Crumrine. *Hist. of Washington Co.*, p. 490; Payne, *Hist. of Journalism in the U. S.*, pp. 202+.

¹¹ Judge Hugh H. Brackenridge, an erratic and well-known citizen of Western Pennsylvania, was frequently engaged in political controversies. Jordan, *Geneal. & Personal Hist. of Western Penn.* II, 774. Wm. Findlay, a Scotch Irishman, also was a well-known controversialist. *Appleton's Cyclopedia*, II, 458.

¹² John Cleves Symmes left New Jersey in 1788, not in 1789. Albach. *Annals of the West*, p. 305. Robert Benham, brother-in-law of John Van Cleve, settled in Losantiville early in 1789. *Original Record of Lots in Losantiville*, pp. 5, 13, 16, in the Coll. of the Hist. & Phil. Society of Ohio; McBride, *Pioneer Biog.*, I, 113-114.

¹³ The settlement at Gallipolis was not begun before June, 1790. Univ. of Cincinnati *Studies*, Ser. II, Vol. III, No. 3, pp. 53-54.

January 2nd 1790 on the day of his arrival.¹⁴ Mr. Tappan who came down with us & who remained only a short time & William McMillan Esq.¹⁵ were appointed Justices of the peace for this town which the Governor altered the name of, from Losantiville to Cincinnati.¹⁶ The settlements at this time were Columbia Cincinnati & North bend. I am not certain whether there were any other but am inclined to believe the settlements at Coleraine or Dunlaps station & Round bottom had commenced South Bend & Ludlows station were settled soon afterwards During the winter my father entered some lots on the upper bank & on that at the S W corner on Sycamore & fourth streets built cabbins for a dwelling & Smiths shop.

The Indians had embodied near the mouth of Scioto & had taken a number of boats & destroyed families descending the river. In April the Militia from the Miamies under Captain Israel Ludlow,¹⁷ from Kentucky under General Scott; & a party of Regulars commanded by General Harmar rendezvoused at Limestone & advanced part by land & part by water But the Indians had left the river before they arrived¹⁸

On the 26th of September General Harmar marched from Fort Washington with eleven hundred regulars & fourteen hundred of the Pennsylvania & upper Counties of Kentucky Militia under his command¹⁹ About the same time Major Hamtramck with regulars, & Militia from the lower Counties of Kentucky marched from the O[ld] post of post St. Vincennes on

¹⁴ This proclamation was dated in reality January 4. *St. Clair Papers, I, 161+*.

¹⁵ Wm. McMillan had already been elected a judge by a popular meeting in 1788. His name appears frequently in the Memoirs. Burnet, *Notes*, p. 57; McBride, *Pioneer Biog. I, 110, 147.*

¹⁶ Van Cleve's statement as to the change of name from Losantiville to Cincinnati agrees with Judge Symmes' testimony, Cf. letter of John Cleves Symmes to Johnathan Dayton, Jan. 9, 1790, in the possession of Peter G. Thomson, Esq. For the controversy over the change of name cf. Burnet, *Notes*, pp. 47+; Greve, *Cincinnati, I, 294-306*; *St. Clair Papers, I, 162+*.

¹⁷ Israel Ludlow, a well-known surveyor, is frequently mentioned by Van Cleve. Either alone or as a partner, he founded Losantiville, Ludlow's Station, Hamilton and Dayton. *Biog. Cyclopedie of Ohio, I, 103*; *Quarterly, see Indices, passim.*

¹⁸ Cf. Albach, *Annals of the West*, p. 537; Jones, *Fort Washington*, pp. 25+.

¹⁹ Cf. American State Papers: Indian Affairs, I, 104-106; Military Affairs, I, 20-36; Cist. *Cincinnati Miscellany, I, 195-7.*

the Wabash²⁰ The latter destroyed a number of the Indian villages on the Wabash Genl Harmar likewise destroyed several in the neighbourhood of the old Miami village which was at the confluence of the rivers St. Mary's & St. Joseph which form the Miami of the lake On the 19th of October Col Harden was detached with two companies of regulars & about eighty militia to destroy a town a few miles up the St. Joseph At one place the path led thro' a narrow strip of prarie & there the Indians were lodged in the woods on the one side & under a bank on the other which skirted between the margins of a swamp & the praire When our troops were completely between the lines of the enemy they commenced the fire with their usual yells The Militia fled precipitately The regulars sustained the unequal contest under every disadvantage for some time until nearly all fell Capt John Armstrong sprang into the swamp & sunk himself under water with his head beneath a tuft of grass within two rods of the bank The Indians lay on the ground all night It is very dark a little before day when he with great difficulty withdrew from his hiding place benumbed & stiff & made his escape

On the 22nd Harden was sent to the Miami village with about 300 regulars & militia under his command & was again defeated; but in this last action each party endeavored to out flank the other & keeping in constant motion the Indians had but little chance of fighting from under cover except running & treeing as it is termed The combatants were scattered for several miles & in some places the one party was overpowered by the numbers & the other party beaten at a short distance It was a hard fought battle but the Indians kept the ground

The army arrived at Fort Washington on the third of November The regular soldiers enlisted under the old Government (before the new Constitution of the United States was formed) as well as the Militia were discharged.

A tract of land of several thousand acres on the East bank of Licking river beginning about six miles from its junction with

²⁰ Major Hamtramck built Fort Knox at Vincennes in July, 1788. In 1793 he was commissioned lieutenant colonel, served with distinction in St. Clair's and Wayne's campaigns, and for almost two years was commandant at Fort Wayne. Appleton's *Cyclopedia*, III, 70; Esarey, *Hist. of Indiana*, I, 97, 104, 110; Albach, *Annals of the West*, pp. 530-36; also Cf. *Quarterly, see Indices, and especially IV, 98, note 13.*

the Ohio belonged to Major Leech²¹ In order to form a settlement thereon & to have a farm opened for himself he offered an hundred acres for clearing & fencing of each ten acre field with the use of the cleared land for three years The majority of the settlers were to make choice of the corner of his tract where three time the quantity of land due to the settlers was to be surveyed into lots & then the settlers to draw by ballot for the first choice My father allowed me to engage as one of the settlers (I being then 18 years old) He calculated on assisting so that we might each get at least 100 acres It was about the middle of March 1791 that I left home The settlers consisted of four men with families & four of us single men. We first erected what was generally termed a station Each family occupied a Block house & I am now uncertain whether we put up stockades or not We were very industrious & progressed with our clearing for Corn until about the last of April when one of Mr. Fowlers sons was killed by an accident He was a lad of about 16 years old & the old Gentlemans main dependance & the family became discouraged & moved away.

In the winter preceding²² about 400 Indians had made an attack on Dunlaps Station on the Great Miami & continued the seige for about 26 hours, had killed all the stock destroyed the grain & burnt all the out buildings Before they reached the Station they killed Mr. Cunningham wounded Mr Sloan & took Abner Hunt prisoner who they massacred in a most shocking manner within sight & hearing of the people of the Station The Garrison consisted of thirty five regulars under the Command of Capt Kingsbury & about fifteen effective men of the inhabitants one of the soldiers received a slight wound & several Indians were killed I was among the party that came to their relief & in a second tour assisted to repair their fortifications at which time I boarded at Mr Hahn's who was killed with two of his neighbours at one time & his eldest son & several others at another shortly after The Indians had now become so daring as to skulk thro the streets at night & through the gardens around Fort Washington Besides many hairbreadth escapes we had news daily of persons killed on the Little Miami or on the Great

²¹ This settlement, founded by Major David Leitch, was known as Leitch's Station. Collins, *Kentucky*, II, 24.

²² This paragraph, and the greater part of the following one, has been printed in the American Pioneer, II, 148-50. For the attack upon Dunlop's Station, Cf. Greve, *Cincinnati*, I, 284-287; McBride, *Pioneer Biog.* I, 14+.

Miami at South bend or between the settlements—one morning a few persons started in a periougue [pirogue] to go to Columbia—the Indians killed most of them a little above the mouth of Deer Creek within hearing of the Town David Clayton one of the killed was one of our family.

On the 21st of May the Indians fired on my father where he was at work on his out lot²³ in Cincinnati & took Joseph Cutter within a few yards of him The alarm was given by halloing from lot to lot until it reached Town I had just arrived from Leaches [Leitch's] Station The men in town were running to the public ground & I there met one who saw the Indians firing on my father I asked if any would proceed with me & pushed on with a few young men without halting—we however met my father after running a short distance & got to the ground soon after the Indians had secured Cutter—whilst we were finding the trail of the Indians on their retreat perhaps forty had arrived most of whom joined on the pursuit—by the time we had gained the top of the river hills we had only eight. Cutter had lost one of his shoes so that we could distinguish his track frequently in crossing water courses & we found there was an equal number of the Indians We were stripped & fortunately a young dog belonging to me led us on the trace & generally kept about a hundred yards ahead We kept them on the full run till dark and thought we sometimes discovered the shaking of the bushes We came back to Cincinnati that night & they only went two miles from where our pursuit ceased. The next day they were pursued but not overtaken. On the first day of June my father was killed by them He was stabbed in five places & scalped. Two men that were with my father run before him he passed them at about 300 yards The Indians in pursuit were behind It was supposed one had concealed himself in a tree top for on my fathers passing it a naked Indian sprang upon him. My father was seen to throw him, but at this the Indian was plunging his knife into his heart He took a small scalp off and run The men behind came up immediately but he was already dead. My eldest sister was married a short time previous & my mother had with her three daughters & a son The three youngest children were too young to be sensible to their loss I immediately resolved to supply the

²³ These outlots of 4 acres each were north of Northern Row (Seventh St.) Benjamin Van Cleve bought two inlots and with his father one outlot. Drake, *Natural and Statistical View, frontispiece and p. 130; Original Record of Lots in Losantiville, pp. 3, 10, 15, 16.*

place of father to them to the utmost of my ability & I feel a consolation in having fulfilled my duty towards them as well as my mother My father had not many debts nor engagements to fulfil I paid some debts by my labor (all he owed) as a day laborer, & my brother in law assisted me in building a house that he had undertook & received the pay for my mother.

There is an epoch in the history of every mans life longed for, & anticipated with anxiety, embraced with enthusiasm & remembered with a lively interest It is that period when he takes upon himself the conducting & management of his own affairs—when the thread of his destiny is committed to himself. It is then he embarks on an unknown sea—to himself & on the skillful guidance of his bark among its billows and shoals depends his successful arrival at his intended port Happy is he who has at this period of life, a father or friend whose experience will afford him a chart; whose kind advice will serve as a compass to direct him I was young and inexperienced without any means of support but my hands & had the accumulated burden of contributing towards the support of a helpless family & whilst necessity stimulated me to exertion it would have prevented my falling into habits of indolence & dissipation had I inclined to them. Had my fortitude & resolution been weaker they might, however, [have] been overcome; for my companions for several years were of the most rude profane & dissipated, such as followers of the army & mostly discharged soldiers—amongst these a knowledge of human nature was perhaps soonest acquired & although I have often been deceived & found the deceitfulness of mankind & the capriciousness of fortune great drawbacks on my calculations I must in justice declare that there is much goodness in the human character, & even amongst the worst of men. If we take the trouble to soothe their prejudices & jealousies their friendship will be subservient to our interest & happiness & proportionately to their opportunities & abilities they will hazard more in active friendship than those in more elevated society. It may not be improper to remark that I have always endeavored to avoid seeming either superior or inferior to those with whom I have had intercourse, or amongst whom my lot placed me: a contrary course will ever bar all confidence. In perils in hardships & in want, I have always cheerfully shared the dangers & fatigues & divided the last mouthful of bread, affording present encouragement to the distressed & inspiring them with a grateful recollection of me

afterwards— The friendships formed in trials dangers & difficulties are most strongly cemented & the attachments are perhaps proportionate to those trials & dangers.— For several years I was in various employments chiefly in the service of the Quarter Master General & Contractors & I have the satisfaction to believe I was particularly noticed by my employers & many persons of rank with whom I became acquainted: amongst these I can mention with pleasure Gov. St. Clair, Col Sargaent Secretary of the Territory, Col Samuel Hodgden Quarter Master General²⁴ Messrs Elliot & Williams Contractors,²⁵ & many others of inferior rank, whom I shall ever hold in grateful remembrance.

After the funeral of my father, I returned & planted my corn & attended it, but was obliged to divide my time & bestow the greater part at Cincinnati for the benefit of the family— I settled my fathers books; fulfilled his engagements, & sold the Smiths tools to the Quarter Master General.

On the eighth of August (1791) I set off for Kentucky in the Quarter Master Generals employ with Van McHenry My uncle Capt Robert Benham was commissioned to purchase horses for the Artillery &c. and several brigades of pack horses & had preceded us. Messrs Thomas Irwin²⁶ Tiba Stebbens James Watts a Mr Sloan & two others were in the Contractors employ & were with us. When we arrived at Lexington Charles Wilkins was purchasing horses for the Contractor & my uncle had gone to Bairds town²⁷ he had left orders for myself & Mr Mc Henry to follow him thither—he had left no horses & we were fatigued in walking so far & concluded to tarry with our friends until he should return We were put in a house of a widow Curtner on the Western Street which run on a rising ground where several good houses were built amongst which the proprietors were Col Patterson²⁸ a Mr Kiser Robert Barr & Charles Wilkins were the principal merchants Love & Mc Nair Inn keepers all on the main street & I am uncertain whether there were any other Taverns or Stores—there might have been one or two of each.

²⁴ Samuel Hodgdon was in charge of the supplies for St. Clair's army, cf. Amer. State Papers, *Mil. Affairs*, I, 37.

²⁵ Cf. Greve, *Cincinnati*, I, 276–77.

²⁶ For Thomas Irwin, see McBride, *Pioneer Biog.* I, 107–78.

²⁷ Bairdstown, i. e., Bardstown, the county seat of Nelson Co., Ky.

²⁸ Colonel Robert Patterson, who built the first blockhouse at Lexington, was one of the three original proprietors of Losantiville, and moved to Dayton in 1807. Conover, *Concerning the Forefathers*, pp. 111–323; Ranck, *Hist. of Lexington*, pp. 23, 26.

We received the horses as they were purchased, branded them, took them to pasture in the neighborhood & occasionally changed them to other pastures Within about two weeks from our arrival my uncle came & we joined him & lay a few days at Col. Robt. Saundar's on cane run near Georgetown whilst the droves of horses were arriving & then took the Artillery horses in the foremost drove to Cincinnati where we arrived on the 27th of August.

My uncle was quite unwell when he returned to Lexington & was very sick after he got home to Cincinnati sometimes so much so as to be unable to sign the provision returns for the horse drivers The account of his purchases & expenditures made a great deal of writing—duplicates or triplicates had to be rendered of each & this labour now all fell on me. We were however at this time in the contractors (Col. Wm Duer) employ On his arrival at Cincinnati he was appointed Superintendant of the Horse department in that service & transferred me with him Within the short time of his illness & without any notice Israel Ludlow agent for the Contractor had superseded his appointment by appointing a Mr Winn in that place & my uncle was suffered to make out provision returns & to give orders for some time before he got information of his being turned out. He now began to recover rapidly & his being thus treated prompted the friendly interposition of the Governor in his favor & he was appointed to the same situation in the Quarter masters service & again transferred me with him: for the month past we neither asked nor received pay from the Contractor.

On the 23rd of September my uncle received his letters of instructions & we immediately left Fort Washington²⁹ with three or four brigades of pack horses loaded with armourers & artificers tools— The Artificers with Capt Tharp their Superintendant marched with us armed & composed but a weak escort We encamped the first night on the bank opposite to Fort Hamilton which had been recently erected At daybreak I went some distance from the encampment to look for my horse & discovered a person armed I ran in & gave the alarm a party turned out with me & we met the person who had discovered me & ran in by a more circuitous route very much frightened, it immediately occurred to me that we had alarmed each other & on asking a few questions I ascertained it.— On the fifth day

²⁹ St. Clair started with the main body of troops on September 17. Albach, *Annals of the West*, pp. 577+.

in the morning we overtook the army at the first wet prairie between thirty & forty miles in advance of Fort Hamilton. This day the army lay still & the next we marched about seven or eight miles. The day following we moved about half a mile & remained about a week, during this time Fort Jefferson was commenced & about half finished on ground on the right of our encampment. We then returned with six brigades of pack-horses to Fort Hamilton one of which to Fort Washington where I also returned. Our escort consisted of about half of Faulkners company of Levies commanded by Capt. Faulkner with his Lieutenant Mr Huston who afterwards in the regular service at Greenville fought with Capt. Bradshaw the fatal duel where both were mortally wounded. Col Duer the Contractor had failed. It had almost defeated all the arrangements of the army he failed to transport provisions sufficient for the troops & they were reduced before this time to short allowance in consequence of it— The orders from the board of war to the Commander in Chief were said to be imperiously to proceed. We were sent to bring provisions to assist the other line in the transportation. On the last day of October we over took the army twenty two miles in advance of Fort Jefferson & found the Commander in Chief so ill with the gout as to be carried in a litter. We met on the same day a few miles before we came up with the army about sixty of the Kentucky militia deserting in one body. This evening the first regiment was detatched to endeavor to bring them back & to escort in provisions then on the way.

On the first of November the army lay I think at Still water. On the second & third we marched to a Creek supposed to be the St. Mary's but which was a branch of the Wabash. We had orders to return next morning with some pack horses to assist the other line in bringing more provision.

I had been entered as a pack horseman at fifteen dollars per month: At times I had considerable writing to do. Every brigade drew their rations separately; & when we were not on the march I had this service to perform, orders to communicate & often the care of my uncles horses as well as my own, when we were on the march we could sometimes make arrangements so that I could ride, at other times I had to carry a share of our stores or baggage lashed on my beast & was obliged to foot it through the mud in the roughest manner. We had a Marquee or large horsemens tent & having room took several officers into

our mess Having sometimes to be in company & employment with officers & at other times in the mud I was induced to take all my clothes with me; so that even when I was able to ride I always had luggage sufficient to make it necessary to use a lash rope On the fourth at day break³⁰ I began to prepare for returning & had got about half my luggage on my horse when the firing commenced We were encamped just within the lines on the right The attack was made on the Kentucky militia, almost instantaneously the small remnant of them that escaped broke through the line near us & this line gave way followed with a tremendous fire from the enemy & passed me. I threw my bridle over a stump from which a tent pole had been cut & retreated a short distance & finding the troops halt, returned & brought my horse a little further; I was now between the fires & the troops giving way again was obliged to leave him a second time—as I quit him he was shot down & I felt extremely glad as I concluded now that I should be at liberty to share in the engagement My inexperience prompted me to calculate on the strength of our forces being far superior to any the savages could assemble & that we should soon have the pleasure of pursuing them & I determined on being if possible among the foremost in the pursuit, not more than five minutes had yet elapsed when a soldier near me had his arm swinging with a wound I requested his arms & accoutrements as he was unable to use them promising to return them to him & commenced firing—the smoke was settled about three feet from the ground but I generally put one knee to the ground & with a rest from behind a tree waited the appearance of an Indians head from behind a tree or when one ran to change his position. Before I was convinced of my mistaken calculations I had become familiarized to the scene & the battle was half over. Hearing the fire at one time unusually brisk near the rear of our left wing I crossed the encampment—two Levy officers were just ordering a charge: I had fired away my ammunition & some of the bands of my musket flew off, I picked up another & a cartouch box nearly filled & ran ahead to a large

³⁰ This detailed account of St. Clair's defeat was printed in the American Pioneer, II, 150–153, from which it was copied by Albach, in the Annals of the West, pp. 582–83, and used by Roosevelt in his Winning of the West, IV, 41. For other accounts of St. Clair's expedition cf. American State Papers: *Indian Affairs*, I, 136–38; *Military Affairs*, I, 36–39, 41–44; McBride, *Pioneer Biog.* I, 151–175; *St. Clair Papers*, II, 251+.

tree where I charged my piece, & fixed my bayonet, almost against the party reached me—I think there was about thirty of us—I was soon in front—the Indians run to the right where was a small valley filled with logs. I bent my course after them & found I was with only seven or eight men the others had kept straight forward & had halted about 30 yards off We halted also & being so near to where the savages lay concealed the second fire from them left me standing alone; my cover was a small sugar tree or Beech scarcely large enough to hide me, & most of the Indians in the hollow from 50 to 70 yards distant directed their fire at me: The balls some struck the tree & many ploughed along the ground at its root one moved my hat but did not cut it. I fired away all my ammunition I am uncertain whether with any effect or not—a little before I left this place I discovered an Indian throwing his blanket up & down at the side of a tree & sometimes his body appeared I took good & steady aim past the side of the tree & when his body appeared fired & did not see him or his blanket more. When my ammunition was expended I looked for the party near me, I saw them retreating and half way back to the lines. I then retreated running my best & was soon in; by this time our artillery had been taken I know not whether the first or second time our troops had just retaken it and were charging the Indians over the Creek in front, & some person pointed me to an Indian running with one of my kegs of powder but I did not see him; there were about 30 of our men & officers laying scalped around the pieces of Artillery; it appeared the Indians had not been in a hurry for their hair was all skinned off. Daniel Bonham a young man raised by my uncle & brought up with me & whom I regarded as a brother had by this time received a shot through his hips & was unable to walk I got a horse & got him on. My uncle had received a ball near his wrist that lodged near his elbow. The ground was literally covered with dead & dying men & the Commander gave orders to take them away, perhaps it had been given more explicitly—happening to see my uncle he told me that a retreat was ordered & that I must do the best I could & take care of myself. Bonham insisted that he had a better chance of escaping than me & urged me to look to my own safety alone I found the troops pressing like a drove of bullocks to the right & gained the front when I saw an officer (who I took to be Lieut Morgan an aid to Genl Butler) with six or eight men start on a run a little to the left of where I was. I immediately ran & fell

in with them—in a short distance we were so suddenly among the Indians who were not apprised of our object that they opened to us & ran to the right & left without firing I think about 200 of our men passed through them before they fired except a chance shot When we had proceeded about two miles most of those mounted had passed me, a boy had been thrown or fell off a horse & begged my assistance & I ran pulling him along about two miles further until I had nearly become exhausted The last two horses in the rear had; one, two; & the other carried three men I made an exertion & threw him on behind the two men The Indians followed but about half a mile further The boy was thrown off sometime afterwards but escaped & got in safe My friend Bonham I did not see on the retreat but understood he was thrown off about this place & lay on the left of the trace where he was found in the winter & was buried I took the cramp violently in my thighs & could scarcely walk until I got within a hundred yards of the rear where the Indians were tomahawking the old & wounded men I further detained here to tie my pocket handkerchief around a mans wounded knee & saw the Indians close in pursuit at this time—for a moment my spirits sunk & I felt in despair for my safety I hesitated whether to leave the road or whether I was capable of further exertions If I left the road the Indians were in plain sight & could easily overtake me I threw the shoes off my feet & the coolness of the ground seemed to revive me. I again began a trot & recollect when a bend in the road offered & I got before half a dozen persons to have thought that it would occupy some time of the enemy to massacre these before my turn would come By the time I had got to Stillwater (about eleven miles) I had gained the centre of the flying troops & like them came to a walk I fell in with Lieutenant Shaumburgh (who if my recollection serves me was the only officer of artillery that got away unhurt) with Corporal Mott & a woman who was called red headed Nance—the latter two were both crying Mott was lamenting the loss of his wife & Nance of an infant child Shaumburgh was nearly exhausted & hung on Motts arm I carried his fusee & accoutrements & led Nance In this sociable way we came together & arrived at Jefferson a little after sunset. The commander in chief had ordered Col Dark³¹ to press forward to the convoys of

³¹ Col. Wm. Darke, in whose honor Darke County was named, was an officer in the Virginia militia. *Appleton's Cyclopedias*, II, 78; Howe, *Ohio Historical Collections*, p. 128.

provisions & hurry them on to the army Maj Truman Capt Sedam & my uncle were setting forward with him a number of soldiers packhorse masters & men & myself among them joined them on foot We came on a few miles when all overcome with fatigue agreed to halt Darius Curtus Orcutt a packhorse master had stolen at Jefferson one pocketfull of flour & the other of beef, one of the men had a kettle & Jacob Fowler & myself groped round in the dark until we found water where a tree had been torn out of root & we made a kettle of soup of which I got a small portion amongst the many It was then concluded as there was a bend in the road a few miles further on that the Indians might undertake to intercept us there & we decamped & travelled about four or five miles further I had got at Jefferson a rifle & ammunition from a wounded Militia man an old acquaintance to bring in A sentinel was set & we lay down to rest & lay until the Governor came up a few hours after; I think I never slept so profoundly & I could hardly get awake when on my feet. On the third the ground was covered with snow, the flats were now filled with water frozen over as thick as a knife blade I was worn out with fatigue my feet knock'd to pieces against the roots in the night & in splashing barefooted among the ice In the morning we got to a camp of packhorsemen & amongst them I got a doughboy or water dumpling & proceeded We got this day within seven miles of Hamilton & lay around a burning tree so stiffened as to be unable to get out of the way if the tree had been falling on us On the sixth I arrived at Hamilton soon in the morning over the ground very rough & much frozen & remained there until next morning

Nov 7th Notwithstanding the Indians had killed several on the road recently between Hamilton & Cincinnati I came with Joseph Stephenson & with no arms but the rifle I had brought in, to Cincinnati.

On the 25th November we were discharged I received my pay, entered into the service of Elliot & Williams the new Contractors & set off the same day for the falls of Ohio to bring up a boat load of salt.³² We were detained waiting for our load

³² Salt was frequently brought up the river from Louisville, where it sold in 1796 for 20s Va. currency per bushel, in contrast to \$6.00 to \$8.00 per bushel for the supply brought across the mountains by packhorses. Bullitt's Lick and Mann's Lick were the chief sources of supply in Kentucky. Collins, *Kentucky, II, 100, 370*; Gephart, *Transportation and Industrial Development in the Middle West, pp. 85-86*; Imlay, *Topographical Description of the Western Country, p. 121.*

until the 12th or 13th of December & landed at Cincinnati December 22nd—Capt Benham had brought the old Contractors Cattle 30 or 40 head & Elliot & Williams had 66 I engaged & had one hand with me to herd them bringing the different droves to camp & salting them during the winter I built my camp between Licking & the Ohio about three miles from the river at Cincinnati—during this time I sold my improvement at Leaches [Leitch's] station for a mere trifle.

In March when the grass began to spring up I left the Cattle & went a trip with boats to Fort Hamilton & returned in twelve days A number of Horses belonging to the Quarter Master were sent to my old camp to recruit & I attended to them until the 10th of May. In the evening I was expected down to draw provisions & arrived about dark The Quarter Master General had determined to send me express to Philadelphia & had been to my mother & had my clothes packed up a horse saddled & everything in readiness for my journey I received my instructions from him & the Commandant & departed before midnight The following are true copies of my instructions³³

"The Bearor hereof Mr Benjamin Van Cleve being charged with public business at Philadelphia. All public officers & the good citizens of the United States are requested to aid & facilitate his journey by furnishing him with such assistance as may become necessary

Given under my hand at Fort Washington the 10th of May
1792 Ja: Wilkinson Lieut. Col. Comdt
commanding the troops of the
United States on the Ohio.

Mr B Van Cleve.

Fort Washington May 10th 1792

Sir,

With the dispatches you have in charge you will proceed on the most direct route to Philadelphia.³⁴ The forty dollars I have

³³ A synopsis of this journey was given in the *American Pioneer*, II, 219-220.

³⁴ Regular packet service up the Ohio was not started before 1793. Hence Van Cleve took the Wilderness Road as the most direct route, although about 850 miles, to Philadelphia from Cincinnati. Cf. *Centinel of the Northwestern Territory*, Nov. 23, 1793; Filson, *Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucky*, ed. 1793, pp. 64-65; Filson Club Publications, vol. 2, pp. 16-17.

given you will I expect be equal to your expenses but if through detention or by accident, it should prove insufficient, you will apply to the Secretary of war, who will order you a further supply.

You will write to me from Lexington, & from the Crab-orchard & particularly note the time you leave it, the company you go with, & any other material occurrence.

Your business must be communicated to no person whatever, unless you want assistance, in which case you will make use of General Wilkinson's letter— Call at my house in Philadelphia & take any commands from thence.

I wish you a safe & speedy journey & am

Sir,

your most obedient Servant

Samuel Hodgden

Q. M. G.

Mr Benjamin Van Cleve.

I left Fort Washington at near 12 o'clock at night as before stated in company with a Captain Kimberland of Kentucky & travelled during the night—at 11 o'clock came to Colin Campbells on the dry ridge & took one hours rest— Mr Campbell had lately built a stockade here & this was all the inhabitant between Cincinnati & four miles from George Town Started from here about noon & got among the hills at Eagle Creek about dark when a most violent storm of rain commenced & our horses lost the road. We were obliged to dismount & hold our horses by the bridles in a dreadful rain all night At daylight found the road near us & proceeded & arrived at Lexington & put up at Mr McNairs

Sunday 13th I left Mr Kimberland & crossed Kentucky & Dicks rivers & came to Col. Benjamin Logans near Lincoln Court house.³⁵ Col Logan was County Lieutenant & I was ordered to call on him for a guard of six men if necessary & for a horse if the one I rode proved insufficient

14 I got another horse, had him shod & got provision & finding as was the practice publications that a company would leave the Crab orchard next day, I travelled about 20 miles to the Crab Orchard

³⁵ Cf. Collins, *Hist. of Kentucky*, II, 482+.

15th Left the Crab³⁶ orchard our company consisting of 19 men & a woman Our arms were five Guns and five Pistols— Rained very hard this day, came through a broken country to Scheckle fords a new Station on Rock Castle river There was one appartment stockaded for horses it was knee deep in mud but I was glad to pay an extravagant price to have my horse in safety & get myself dried & a poor rest on the floor amongst fleas.

16th Very rainy—Came to Richland Creek rode hard until after dark & struck off the road about half a mile & lay, holding our horses by the bridles.

17th Discovered considerable fresh Indian sign, found at several miles distant where they had peeled pawpaw trees & in one place painted them red, in the other black When we came to Cumberland river, we kept up the bottom The road was hedged in close with cane from twenty to thirty feet high, it was a dangerous place & some of our company said they saw an Indian, after which the best fellow was foremost The river was almost swimming Yellow creek was nearly over its banks I swam my horse carrying my dispatches on my shoulder We crossed Cumberland Mountain & came to the settlement in Powells valley, but as we could nothing for ourselves or horses we went past it & encamped.

18 The company seperated— Two young men by the name of Stetler for the Monongahela a Mr Bigger for Chambersburgh in Pennsylvania & myself continued together We came to a Mr McNiels near Powells river.

19th Crossed Powells river & Mountain, Waldens ridge Clench river, Copper Creek & Copper Creek ridge & came to the head of Mockason Gap, & encamped

20th (Sunday) Came through Mockason Gap, over Holstein river & to Major Fulkinsons 12 miles from Washing[ton] Court-house

21st Came through Abington [Abingdon] to Mr Eakis's

22nd Came a mile & a half to Mr Blessings our horses backs were much scalded We washed them with bark ouze & stayed to recruit them

³⁶ From Crab Orchard for two hundred miles the only settlements were at Scheckle's Ford and Powell's Valley. Travelers usually went from here through the Wilderness in groups, for protection from the Indians. Filson Club *Publications*, vol. 2, pp. 40-41; Imlay, *Topographical Description of the Western Country*, p. 114.

- 23rd Came to Mr Millers opposite Fort Chissell [Chiswell]³⁷
24th Came over New river & Alleganey mountain & lodged
at Mr Havens' on Roan oak river
25th Came to Boitetoit [Botetourt]³⁸ & lodged at Mr Kings
26th Came to Mr Hardy's seven miles from Lexington &
parted this day with the Mr Stetlers & Mr Rice
27th (Whitsunday) Came through Lexington & within
seven miles of Staunton
28th Came to Laurence Protsmans in Rockingham
29th Came to two large stone houses of Dutch people
30th Came to Jacob Leonards in Stephensburgh or New
town
31st Came to Martinsburgh
June 1st 1792 Lay sick in Martinsburgh attended by a
Physician who I understood was a native of Russia (I think
perhaps that part formerly belonging to Poland) he gave me a
history of a campaign in which he had served in the East with
much curious information
2nd Crossed Potomac & lodged in Williamsport at a Mr
Davis's
3rd Parted from Mr Bigger & came through Hagerstown &
to Mr Scotts in Nichol's Gap in the South mountain.
4th Travelled in company with Mr Scott to Little York
44 miles
5th Came through Lancaster & six miles further
6th came to the white horse 26 miles from Philadelphia
7th At 2 o'clock P M arrived at Philadelphia & put up at
Mr Alexander Andersons No 39 North Second Street sign of the
Sorrel horse & nearly opposite to Christs Church
June 8th Called at General Knox's & he had gone to New
York—Delivered my dispatches to Major Stagg Chief Clerk
at the War office Corner of Chestnut & fifth streets.
9th I went to my uncle Wynkoops 16 miles from Phila-
delphia & returned on the 11th day against the War office was
open, expected every day to set out on my return home; on the
15th went to the Playhouse Southwark The play was the
Country wedding & dancing on the tight rope

³⁷ Fort Chiswell was founded in 1759 by Wm. Byrd, the Third. It was located near Wytheville, and was for years the frontier outpost in this region, Summers, *Hist. of Southwest Virginia*, p. 71.

³⁸ Cf. Summers, *Hist. of Southwest Virginia*, pp. 106, 108.

16 Some of my friends in at market & I went out with them as far as Frankfort

17th (Sunday) I went to Christs Church & attended divine service They have an extraordinary organ here.

18th I took a view of the foundation of the house now building for the President (Genl Washington) & drew a plan of it— I have to call daily at the War office at 9 or 10 o'clock to see if there are any commands for me

20th I went home with Garret Wynkoop from market to Montgomery County & returned in the morning.

23rd Went to my uncles in Montgomery County & returned on the 25th viewed the Bettering house,³⁹ State House & yard, Doct. B. Franklins statue in front of the New Library &c. The statue of Doct Franklin I was told was made in Italy & cost either 400\$ or £500 Sterling I am not sure which It was presented by William Bingham Esq.

27th General Knox asked me if I would have any objections to go to New York on business, he observed that as I was under pay he did not know that it would be improper to employ me in going there altho' on another business from that which I was engaged for He stated that the heads of department had presented two elegant horses to Capt Joseph Brant⁴⁰ Chief of the six nations of Indians I informed him that any reasonable service that I could perform for the public I was willing to perform & that I would be much pleased to go to New York & had rather be engaged in active service than be idle. He seemed very well pleased But I informed him that I had no money I would have to apply for money to bear expenses— He enquired particularly of me the amount I had received & respecting my expenditures on my answering him broke out abruptly & swore with vehemence that it took more for my expenses than would support the prince of Mecklinberg, I suppose he was in jest but I felt nettled & observed that I ate three times a day as I was accustomed to do at home & my horse had to have hay & oats, that I had been on expenses almost fifty days & on forty dollars & that I was a small matter behind with my landlord He made no further reply, but gave orders to the Chief Clerk

³⁹ The old Walnut Street prison, Scharf & Westcott, *Hist. of Philadelphia*, I, 267; Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia, and Penn.* I, 406.

⁴⁰ Brant came to Philadelphia, June 6, 1792, for conferences with government officials. Stone, *Life of Joseph Brant II*, 324–329.

about my money, instructions, & said I would return in the stage.

I drew by order at the bank twenty five dollars in silver & thought it unnecessary to carry saddlebags—the money being heavy & inconvenient to carry I thought of taking no more with me than was barely sufficient for my expenses & without making a close calculation except as to the days I should be gone supposed eight dollars sufficient for three days whereas my passage in the stage was four & my diet & lodging ferriages & keeping two horses amounted to considerably more than the other four. My letter of instructions was as follows

"War department
June 27th 1792

Sir

You will proceed from hence to the City of New York taking under your care, two saddle horses the property of Capt. Joseph Brandt— On your arrival there you will deliver the said horses to Mr Edward Bardin at the city tavern taking his receipt; & whom you will request to furnish stabling for said horses, until the arrival of Capt. Brandt.

You will keep an exact account of your expenses to, at, & from the City of New York.

Your route to New York will be, from Philadelphia to Bristol, Trenton, Princeton New Brunswick, Woodbridge, Elizabeth town, Newark, to Paulushook ferry.

Having delivered the horses as above directed you will immediately return to this city.

I am Sir

Your humble servant

Jno. Stagg Jun
Chff Clk

Mr B. Van Cleve.

I set off for New York at four oclock in the afternoon & lodged at Bristol having travelled twenty miles

28th Breakfasted at H. Drakes in Trenton—he was an old acquaintance & formerly kept a Tavern at Monmouth Court-house—passed through Princeton, Brunswick Woodbridge & lodged at Joseph Lyons in Elizabethtown having travelled sixty miles this day. I was acquainted with Mr Lyons two brothers many of his acquaintances in the North western

Territory & promised to bear his letters to his brothers & made known to him the circumstance of my having with me through inadvertence a sum insufficient to bear my expenses He politely gave me a note authorizing me to take passage in the stage of a line in which he was one of the proprietors & to pay my passage when I arrived in Philadelphia

29th I arrived in New York by 11 o'clock Captain Brant had arrived in the Stage before me & receipted for the horses himself He was quite intelligent & communicative, wrote a decent hand, & was dressed more than half in the fashion of the whites. The heat of the sun was intense & I had rode hard, was much fatigued and quite unwell, but I performed my business—I delivered letters to Major Staggs father & others of which I was charged chiefly in the neighborhood of St. Pauls Church, the Bear market, & Maiden lane. At 3 o'clock I took my passage in the Stage & arrived that night at Mr Lyons in Elizabethtown where I had lodged the night before

30th Left Elizabethtown at two in the morning— when I left New York there was only one other passenger, a sailor who had just arrived from China or the East Indies & had his pay in silver tied in a course handkerchief which he held in his hand We agreed to treat the drivers & give them a small fee alternately to give us a good ride. From Elizabethtown to Trenton our Stage was quite crowded, Aaron Kitchell esq. was one of the passengers & several persons of rank were in company with whom I did not get acquainted Mr Kitchell had some relatives & many friends in Cincinnati & conversed most of the way relative to them & the Country Another Stage was running with us which was empty & my first Stage mates' & my example added to the ambition of the drivers to outrun the empty stage gave us a merry ride indeed We arrived at Philadelphia at half past 3 o'clock having travelled eighty miles

July 1st 1792 (Sunday) I was very sick—a dreadful hurricane happened today from the N. & N. W. the vessels in the harbour were driven to and fro almost every where, one Brig was driven on the bar & a fine ship lying near Vine Street was forced from her moorings, drifted about a mile down (with the tide) on her beam ends & got aground. Several boats were upset & one boy drowned

4th Anniversary of American Independence— My uncle Wynkoop & several of my friends came to town— Doct. Morrell from Cincinnati arrived & put up at this Tavern— The anniver-

sary was celebrated 30 rounds of twelve pounders a morning & evening gun were fired— I think a Col Proctor commanded the artillery

Kentucky had become a State since I had passed through it She was admitted into the Union on the 1st day of June 1792 Vermont had recently been admitted so that there were now fifteen States in the Union. When I came through Kentucky the Convention had just risen but I was unable to procure a copy of the Constitution

July 5th Intelligence from New York—"Last Lord's day between 3 & 4 o'clock P. M. we were visited with a severe squall of wind accompanied with some rain.

Mr Wade Ship Carpenters boat which contained him, his wife & two children & a young man were overset opposite Yellow hook a few miles from this city & all drowned except the young man who clung to the boat.

Also another boat with three men & two boys were overset & they were all drowned.

Also we learn that a sloop containing fifteen or sixteen persons were all drowned in consequence of this tremendous gust.—tis supposed that several other boats were overset & persons lost the truth of which we cannot avouch."

6th I attended as usual at the War office & was informed by General Knox that Col. Hodgden was on his way from Pittsburgh & I should certainly leave Philadelphia on Thursday (this being Friday) Major Stagg asked leave of absence for me to visit my relatives & the General politely consented that I should be absent until Tuesday evening & I went this evening to my uncle Wynkoops.

7th I had determined last evening to visit my friend^[s] in New Jersey & the place of my nativity & I travelled this day forty seven miles by 3 o'clock P. M. I arrived first at my Great Grandmother Benham's I found her sitting churning butter at a small churn, the staff of which was almost worn off. She was ninety one years of age.⁴¹ One of her daughters was present (Mrs Vanhorne,) & a negro woman who was left to attend to her & to receive freedom at her death I remonstrated against the impropriety of her labouring & was told that this was rather a favorite amusement to her, that she was very childish & had

⁴¹ Catherine Benham, born Van Dyke, belonged to a family that was remarkable for its longevity. Her mother was living in 1772 at the age of ninety-nine. Note A. *Van Cleve Manuscript.*

been refused it & would cry about it when prevented. I went after another of her daughters my mothers aunt (Betty Conover) to one of the neighbors in a light wagon with her son John—at my uncle Thomas Wests whose wife (Anna) was my fathers sister & called on several old acquaintances & lodged at night at my uncle Benjamin Van Cleves.

8th (Sunday) I went to my uncles William Van Cleves & Daniel Hays's & visited many other old acquaintances & on the 9th came in company with John Conover came 11 miles on my return to Anna Taylors another aunt of my mothers near Allentown

10th. Returned to my uncles Isaac Wynkoops in Pennsylvania

11th Returned to Philadelphia against opening of the office & Maj. Stagg informed me there was no liklihood of my returning home immedately

14th Was on board the Wilmington packet all the forenoon with Mr De Butts the mate who claims he is a Cousin to Captain De Butts (afterwards aid to General Wayne) The packet is commanded by Capt Collins— In the afternoon sauntered through the city with a Mr Holmes a merchant of Sussex in New Jersey.

This day was celebrated here as the Anniversary of the Revolution in France A vessel in the harbor fired cannon all day— Illuminations & fire works were displayed back of Oelers hotel The doors windows & tops of the houses were crowded with spectators on the occasion & a dinner was provided at the hotel for the Cincinnati Society.

15th (Sunday) Went to the Friends meeting— One hour & five minutes was occupied in meditation & silent waiting, when a reverend looking man raised from his seat & made a short discourse on the prevailing vices & errors of mankind. He then set down & in a few minutes a man about 30 years of age arose & spoke fluently on the passions, their tendency & the necessity of our controlling them, of governing ourselves & of cultivating humility & contentment.

It was a Quaker family that I lived with & most of the boarders were of that sect Whilst with them I read Barclays appology & many of their books The landlord & landlady assumed the exercise of parental authority over me the same as over their own son. I believe I was more obedient to them & a considerable share of mutual attachment took place. I felt

regret at parting with them & my good mother shed tears on the occasion.

16th I was informed at the War office that Col. Hodgden had arrived I went immediately to his house & he informed me that my relatives at Cincinnati were all well on the 12th of last month.

22nd (Sunday) Went with David Brookes a son in law of my landlady, a Mr Pierson & several young men of the Quaker profession to Schuylkiln We rested & drank a bottle of excellent Madeira in a cool summer house at St. Tammany's wigwam⁴²

July 25th I received my dispatches & instructions & called for commands at Col. Hodgdens & Col Clement Biddles & came 11 miles to the Buck on the Lancaster road— my instructions are as follows viz:

War department
July 25th 1792

Sir,

You will proceed immediately with the letters & packages delivered in your charge to Pittsburgh. The Letter directed to Major General Wayne you will deliver to him, & proceed with the remainder to Fort Washington.

Major General Wayne will furnish you with a conveyance down the river, among the first boats which shall be going to Fort Washington.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant
Knox
Secy of War

Mr Benjamin Van Cleve.

26th Came forty seven miles to the Sign of the bird in hand within eight miles of Lancaster.

27th Came through Lancaster crossed the Susquehanna at Wrights ferry came also through Little York Dovertown & to Captain Carpenters in the Canawaga settlement

28th Came through Carlisle & Shippensburg & to Strasburgh at the foot of the North mountain.

29th (Sunday) Came over the three mountains by the burn'd

⁴² This wigwam of the Sons of St. Tammany was a favorite resort, although not one that was strictly in accord with Quaker ideals. Scharf & Westcott, *Hist. of Philadelphia*, I, 432.

cabbins; over sideling hill Rays hill crossed Juniatta & came to bloody run The roads have been very much improved since I crossed these mountains before At that time they were only opened by cutting the brush & logs out sufficient for a wagon to pass & not dug The route wound backward & forward on the face of a mountain to gain the ascent I saw the place where we tied the trees to our wagon to descend Rays hill & the road starts now from the same place & is dug along the mountain so that good loads may be drawn up it.⁴³

30th Came through Bedford, over Dryridge & Allegany & to Gilmore's in the Glades

31st Came by Jones's mill over Laurel Hill & Chestnut ridge to Henry Whites near Yohiogeny [Youghiogheny].

August 1st Came over Yohiogeny river to Brownsville (formerly known by the name of Redstone, or Redstone old fort In New Jersey I remember when the whole country west of the mountains was called Redstone There is a small creek that empties into the Monongahela at this place called Redstone) Crossed the Monongahela & came to Ten Mile Creek to my uncle Peter Benhams & remained there the day following

3rd Came to Washington & lodged at John Dodds'

4th Came to Pittsburgh & delivered my dispatches to General Wayne I put up at Mr Tannehills Lieut. Harrison with whom I had been acquainted & who was afterward Governor of the Indiana Territory &c put up here at the same time I stayed here until the 7th I must confess that I was guilty of great misconduct in going so far out of my way to see my friends when I might have been at Pittsburgh two days sooner. I was slightly reprimanded by General Wayne for being as long on the road. I had no excuse & received it conscious that I deserved it.

7th I left Pittsburgh, with two boats under the Command of Ensign Hunter with a sergaent & Corporal & twenty one privates, new recruits enlisted in Morristown & New Brunswick in Jersey We had Dennis Ferris for our pilot The Ensigns boat had a quantity of Cannon balls, two pieces of Artillery & a few boxes of shoes on board; the other boat was loaded with oats & Corn We thought we would be more at liberty & the pilot & myself having the Corporal & six men with us took charge of the beat of grain We came past Chartiers Creek & lay near

⁴³ Cf. p. 14.

Ulrich's The river was very low & we were unable to drift at night so that we made about 15 miles a day.

11th Arrived at Wheeling We had but just landed when four of our soldiers deserted. I turned out with a party & we searched for them until night without effect

12th (Sunday) We left Wheeling & arrived at Marietta on the 17th I lodged on shore with an old acquaintance a Mr Buell

18th Passed the little Kenhawa & lay opposite Bellpre The river being so low we often run on shoals & sand bars I was exceedingly fond of swimming & being the best hand at getting the boat off was generally foremost at it; amongst the soldiers in our boat was one whose name was Adam Hill a rope maker recruited at Morristown exceeding fond of drink We had from Pittsburgh a passenger by the name of Joseph Swearingen & another from lower down by the name of Findley & we had a keg which we had to fill every few days with whiskey We kept the soldiers in our boat generally mellow Adam was entirely devoted to me & would sometimes sing for us half a day together I had brought from Philadelphia about 25 volumes of books which I read mostly if not all through on our passage so that the time did not pass heavily away Adam was a very good washer & did all my washing The Ensign & his lady interchanged visits with us & we treated them with sweetened whisky on these occasions when they visited us but the extreme heat & tediousness of the passage induced Mrs Hunter to stay at Marietta

19th (Sunday) Passed little & big Hockhockings & lay at Belleville

21st We came over L'tart falls⁴⁴ & lay a little below We met here a number of canoes from Kentucky.

23rd We passed the Great Kenhawa [Kanawha] & lay at Gallipolis (the French Station) The Great Kenhawa was raised considerably so that we can make better progress in sailing.

24th Did not get our boat fast all day—lay a little above Guiandot

25th The pilot run a head in a canoe with Mr Swearingen & myself to take a hunt & was to wait at the mouth of Guiandot for us We wounded a deer & was so long searching for it &

"Letart Falls, really a ripple, but in pioneer days "machinery" was necessary here in order to pull a boat upstream. Cramer, *Navigation, ed. 1818*, p. 87; Cuming, *Western Tour*, p. 120.

without getting it at last that the boats passed us & the Canoe went on & when we arrived at the river they were several miles a head We had to cross Guiandot at the mouth which was pretty full & run until we overtook them discovered some fresh Indian sign below Guiandot We passed this day Great & little Guiandot & big Sandy & lay a little below.

26th Came fifteen miles below Scioto.

27th Came to the three islands

28th Passed Limestone & lay at Charlestown

29th Passed Eagles Creek Lees Creek White Oak & Bracken & Locust at dark & drifted all night

30th In the morning found ourselves near the twelve mile Creek above the Little Miami We passed the little Miami after dark & came to the landing at Fort Washington & lay until morning.

August 31st, 1792 (Friday) Early this morning I delivered my dispatches to Captain Cushing Commanding then at Fort Washington.

My expenses during my absence from leaving Fort Washington until my return was one hundred & fourteen dollars fifty six & two thirds cents I was away 112 days, one hundred & fourteen including the days of my departure & arrival

I was one month in the Quarter Masters (O'Hara's)⁴⁵ employ after I returned

1793 I did not get my pay until the 15th of March There had been some misunderstanding between Col Hodgden before his departure & General Wilkinson The price for my services had not been stipulated Col Hodgden told my mother that I should be paid accordingly as I discharged my duty but added that I should have a dollar or ten shillings per day He examined my bills of expenses at Philadelphia & was well satisfied with them. After my arrival at Fort Washington I was called on for my instructions & bill of expenses I handed them to the Quarter Master General deputy (John Belli)—⁴⁶ they were mislaid.

⁴⁵ James O'Hara, an important contractor in supplies for the Western Troops, succeeded Hodgdon as quarter master general. O'Hara did most effective work, especially for Wayne's expedition, and was a well known citizen of Pittsburgh. *American Pioneer*, I, 436-37; II, 270; Killikelly, *Hist. of Pittsburgh*, p. 519; McBride, *Pioneer Biog.* III, 32.

⁴⁶ Major John Belli was deputy quartermaster general under Wayne, and settled later at the mouth of Turkey Creek, near Portsmouth. Bannon, *Scioto Sketches*, pp. 39-40; Jones, *Fort Washington*, pp. 82-84; Evans, *Hist. of Scioto County, Index*.

I had fortunately kept copies & had repeatedly to produce copies I was ordered to call another time & in a few days. I became tired & disgusted with their arrogant & ungenerous treatment & in want of the money I begged they would pay me something anything that they thought I merited There was no mails nor way for me to make it known or get redress at Philadelphia & they were so good as to pay me five shillings per day—I paid Israel Ludlow for my lots in Cincinnati got bills of sale for them & cleared & fenced them I laboured intolerably hard so as to injure my health & raised a fine crop of corn

The young men of Kentucky after their summers work was over, frequently came to Fort Washington to engage in the public service Knowing this, Stacey McDonough & myself engaged with Elliot & Williams to bring salt & other loading from the falls of Ohio. They found a boat & a hundred weight of flour for each trip we performed & gave us six shillings & six pence per barrel for the freight We took the boat down ourselves & engaged our hands to be ready at a certain day (when we got our load) & for five dollars each we brought up one load of salt & two of corn by the first of December & I made about seventy five dollars clear of all expenses. We then engaged at fifteen dollars per month & went for another load of salt which we did not receive until after the first of January, 1794—we had a tedious trip, the river was almost shut with ice & we did not arrive at Fort Washington until Jan. 25th.⁴⁷

On the 7th of February 1794 I engaged with my uncle Capt Benham to keep a store at Greenville which was now Head Quarters. In 1793 the army lay at Hobsons Choice below & adjoining the town of Cincinnati. It had moved out, & built forts at St Clair Recovery & Greenville My uncle was in partnership in a Grocery or sutlers shop with Alexander Andrews I took out six horses loaded with stores & liquors Mr Andrew had not settled his business & I returned for another six horse loads & arrived at Greenville again in March I had no assistance & was boarded at Mr Morrows principal armourer in the Laboratory

On the 2nd of April whilst at supper my shop was broken open before Tattoo beating In the morning I had sent away about \$1500 & had reserved some change only I should suppose by the bulk between 20 & 50 dollars My trunk was taken all my

⁴⁷ Cf. p. 28; Note 32.

clothes this money & some books & other small articles I arose on the third at Day break & found my pocket book near the creek at the upper bridge It was empty & lying open—soon after my trunk was found over the creek near the lower bridge I got some few articles of clothing & some papers

There was a general order against selling whiskey & any other liquor without a permit⁴⁸ My employers had left with me several horse loads of whiskey one of cherry bounce & some other liquors & knowing the present orders told me to do the best I could with it from which I inferred I was to sell it & smuggle it off as carefully as I could which was a notorious practice amongst Sutlers. I had disposed of the whiskey & almost all the other liquors My uncle at the request of a subaltern officer had brought him about 200\$ worth of stores without charging him any advance on them & having waited a long time without his ever speaking about compensation ventured to ask him for the money There was no doubt but this gave occasion to watch me & I was informed on & on the fourth a sentinel was placed at my door with orders to let no person whatever in or out except myself & not to suffer me to take anything in or out

On the sixth I was tried by a General Court Martial whereof

Captain Ford was President

Captain Howell Lewis	members	{ Captain Cook Captain Thomson & Lieutenant Massie
Captain Price		
Lieutenant Ingersoll		
Ensign Charles Hyde Judge		
Advocate		

For disobedience of the General Order of the 24th of January that in selling bartering or giving spirituous liquor to a soldier, or soldiers of the third sub-legion on the night of the third instant & thereby occasioning intoxication & irregularity among the soldiers of said sub-legion

To which charge I plead not Guilty

Andrew Louck sworn said he saw me sell liquor to a soldier a few days before without a permit (he could not tell to whom nor when where & I believe he swore false)

Henry Sexton was sworn & said that he was sent by Saml

⁴⁸ Cf. a similar order by General Wayne, March 21, 1796, in the MSS. Collection of the Hist. & Phil. Society of Ohio.

Brown with a paper he did not know if it was or was not a permit on which he got from me a quart of Cherry bounce.

Humphrey Gerry was sent after & swore he was with Sexton & drank of the liquor. He swore that Sexton got two quarts at several times but he was unable to say whether he had a permit—he had some papers.

Brown was then sent for & swore honestly that he had been a good customer & had wrote that he was unwell & wished me to send him a quart of cherry bounce & that I did so.

Lieutenant Andrew Gregg who was the informant & swore that there was on the evening of the 3d much irregularity intoxication amongst the soldiers of the company he belonged to & that he was informed they got their liquor from me.

This is the substance of the testimony there was other inclement matter recorded in the proceedings but nothing relevant is here omitted. The Court found me guilty & under the 23d Article & 13th section of the rules & articles of War sentenced me to forfeit all the liquors in my possession & to go from the legion without the privilege of ever returning to it again in the capacity of a sutler.

On the eighth at night I found some person again in my store but he escaped with my pocket book & a few dollars notwithstanding the centinel & a number whom I had called to my assistance.

On the 11th my sentence was read on parade I had only a few gallons of brandy on hand & they did not take it—I believe the greatest injury sustained was to myself in my own feelings.

On the 15th of April Captain Benham & Andrews arrived at Greenville. They did not then nor had they any reason to find fault with me—the prices of articles here were as follows butter cheese sugar a third of a dollar per pound—flour ten cents, whiskey a dollar a quart, & other articles—the prices of which I have forgotten.⁴⁹ Capt Benham had written to me to inform him with a kind of estimate of the goods on hand & I think I mentioned “without being particular” or without taking the trouble to measure or weigh—I wrote in answer & set down as near as I could guess in this way about one third of a barrel of Coffee

⁴⁹ The Cincinnati corresponding prices were: butter, 1s per lb.; flour, £1. 4s to £1, 10s per bbl; sugar (probably maple sugar), 1s 10d per lb.; whiskey, 5s per gal.; coffee, 2s 6d per lb. Smith & Findlay Accounts, 1794, in Torrence Papers, Box 56, No. 2, property of the Hist. & Phil. Society of Ohio.

one keg of Cherry bounce & a few gallons in another & so on. One of my kegs was tapped through the wall afterwards & half lost It seems Andrews had made a lump bargain with my uncle & had taken all the stores on hand I never knew their bargain nor was I acquainted with the man He might have been deceived by my statement of the goods on hand there might not have been as much for instead of one third there might not have been more than a fourth of a barrel of Coffee & of some other articles in the same way & half a bushel of Coffee at a dollar per pound & other articles in proportion, being deficient would make considerable difference. I am entirely ignorant whether there was less or more than I so carelessly inventoried I supposed they wanted the statement only as a guide in making their purchases to keep up their assortment I had lost great part of my clothes left Greenville penniless & Andrews having made a bad bargain or affecting to have a bad one charged me to my uncle with having embezzled some of the property I was chagrined very much on account of the sentence & am sure I would not have asked so much to dispose of the property had it been my own I was heartily sorry I had done it for the interest of so ungrateful a scoundrel I took some pains to convince my uncle of the falsity of the charge & I feel confident he knew that I was the only real sufferer in every point of view whether he forgot that it was he that had engaged me, or thought of my wages I know not, but he never spoke to me about them & I felt too ambitious to crave them.

16th April I left Greenville with an escort & some brigades of packhorses I think Major Mc Mahan commanded the detachment; we came this day to Fort St Clair— This fort was built in March 1792.

17th We came to Fort Hamilton & myself & the storekeepers lodged at Captain Grier's

Friday April 18th 1794 Came to Cincinnati & was summoned on the petit jury— I think I served about two weeks in court

May 16th 1794⁵⁰ Engaged in the Contractors employ & started on the 24th with Hugh Wilson Commissary John Henry

⁵⁰The entries May 16—July 26, 1794, and the incident cited pp. 59-60, are printed in the American Pioneer, II, 220-224, although there are numerous omissions. Short extracts from the American Pioneer are given also in the Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1903*, pp. 62-64.

Scalesman William Gahagan⁵¹ & Aaron Connor in Two Contractors boats loaded with provision in Company with a detachment of Soldiers consisting of Capt Guions company of infantry & a sergeant & six men artillerists commanded by Capt Thomas Doyle in order to descend the Ohio within 12 leagues of the Mississippi to the site of the old Cherokee fort built by the French & sometimes called Fort Massac⁵² We had also with us eight Chickasaw Indians on their way home

On the 29th we landed at Fort Steuben opposite Louisville engaged Moses Oliver a pilot to take us over The boat in which Wilson was run aground & we brought a keel thro' the falls next day & lightened her & brought them safe over.

June 2nd & 3rd The Major had several boats broken up to line the others so that the balls might not pass through in case of an attack

On the 4th The major arrested Captain Guion⁵³ & sent him back & left Mrs Doyle here & proceeded some distance when one of our Indians died & we halted to bury him with the honors of war We had orders to keep in exact order No 1 the Majors boat No 2 His kitchen boat No 3 The Surgeons boat The Artillery boat No 4, a boat with hogs & forage No 5, Wilsons boat No 6, our No 7, The Indians No 8, Cattle boat No 9, & the Lieut my friend Gregg brought up the rear with No 10. There was a barge with the Majors boat & keel with the Indians

On the 8th we passed the Yellow banks about three leagues below the hanging rock three families settled here This is the first settlement below Salt river & there are only two below to wit at Red Banks & at the Diamond island Station⁵⁴

9th We Passed the Red Banks & Diamond island Station &

⁵¹ Wm. Gahagan, a surveyor and an intimate friend of Van Cleve, is frequently mentioned in the Memoirs. Cf. Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 23.

⁵² Fort Massac, originally established by the French, was on the Illinois bank, $37\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Mississippi. The main purpose in sending this expedition under Major Doyle was to intercept any force under French direction that might attempt to descend the river in order to attack the Spanish possessions west of the Mississippi. *American State Papers, Foreign Affairs*, I, 458-459; Cramer, *Navigation*, p. 125; Alvord, *Illinois Country*, pp. 239, 325, 411, 415.

⁵³ For Major Doyle, Cf. *Quarterly*, XIII, 89; for Captain Guion, Cf. *Quarterly* IV, 98, and *Torrance Papers*, Box 4, No. 66.

⁵⁴ The settlement of Yellow Banks, is now Owensboro, and that at Red Banks is Henderson. Diamond Island Station was about 13 miles below Red Banks. Cramer, *Navigation*, p. 114; Cumings, *Western Pilot*, pp. 62, 64.

bot some fowls not quite as large as a pigeon at 25 cents each full grown fowls sell in Kentucky at six cents

10th Began to stop occasionally & cut pickets & put them on board to be ready to set up on our arrival at Massac

11th Cut more pickets met a Mr Sala & family & three young men going up from the mouth of Cumberland to the Red Banks who concluded to turn back with us We passed the Wabash at dark at Saline we observed a fire on shore & hailed when two Canadian French hunters came to us with their canoes loaded with skins bears oil & dogs Mr Wilson bought 32 gallons of bears oil which they had in a bear skin suspended in their canoe, one of these was a native of France the other had lived this savage or hermits life 26 years through this wilderness from Vincennes to Illinois—before morning we found three others who went with us to hunt for us

12th We passed Cumberland & Tennessee rivers & landed at Massac in the evening The Soldiers put up pickets in a circular form at the upper corner of the old works & brought up the Artillery & ammunition & we were in a good posture of defence before daylight next morning

We were detained at Massac unloading & without any opportunity of seeing the Country until the 3rd day of July when we had passage on board of the Majors boat which was sent with a sergaent & twelve men to the falls for Mrs Doyle Came above the mouth of Tennessee

The land about Massac as far as I was out was not superior to second rate The bottom full of Cypress timber & where there was not much timber of that kind the roots & knees appeared The upland was of that kind of soil natural for wheat The timber the various species of oaks & hickories pecan Locusts Poplar beech etc. The face of the Country tolerably level & covered with brush as well as timber

July 4th came some distance above Cumberland river

5th Came above the big cave or rock & cave It is on the Indian side⁵⁵ of the river, is shaped somewhat like the inside of a Bakers oven about sixty five yards from the front to the extremity within & at the mouth twenty five yards wide The bottom is uneven & descends toward the river it is perhaps below high water mark at the highest floods the sides contain

⁵⁵ i. e., the north side. This House of Nature, as it was popularly known, was frequently used by early emigrants as a shelter. Cramer, *Navigation*, p. 120.

a vast catalogue of the names of such as have visited it with dates of many of the names & some of them remote

6th We passed the Saline & lay opposite the mouth of Wabash We have very rainy weather & disagreeable company.

7th Got to Diamond Island Station

8th Came to Red Banks.

9th We determined to quit the boat & travel the remainder of the way by land & made preparations to set off in the morning.⁵⁶

On the 10th We left Red banks our company consisted of Mr Gahagan Aaron Connor myself, & a Mr Overly from Vincennes who undertook to pilot us We relying on him did not start out of town in the right trace but he assured us that it was to our left & we would fall into it shortly We travelled until night & found no road & encamped He concluded that we might be to left of road leading to Vienna on Green river which was the road we intended to travel, but said that there was a road still to our left that would strike Panther Creek about ten miles up from whence it lead to Hardens⁵⁷ settlement which although more dangerous & less travelled was nearer than the other. This place is a refuge, not for the oppressed but for the horse thieves, rogues and out-laws that have been able to effect their escape from justice in the neighboring states. Neither law nor gospel has been able to reach here as yet. A commission of the Peace had been sent by Kentucky to one Mason and an effort to introduce law by the South-west Territory was made (for it was unknown as yet to which it belonged) but the inhabitants drove the persons away and insisted to do without. I enquired how they managed to marry and was told that the parties agreed to take each other for husband and wife before their friends as witnesses. I was showed two cabins with a street running between where the men had some time ago exchanged wives. An infair was given this day by the aforesaid Mason to a fellow, who had escaped from Carolina for crime and had run off with Mason's daughter to the Diamond Island Station a few weeks before. The father had forbid the man, whose name was Kuykendall his house and threatened to take his life, but had now become reconciled and sent for them. The parents and friends were highly diverted at the recital of the young couple's ingenuity in the time of their courtship and laughed heartily when

⁵⁶ Cf. pp 59-61.

⁵⁷ Hardin's Station, now Hardinsburg.

the woman told it. She said she came down stairs a while after all had retired to rest with her petticoat over her shoulders and returned with him thro' her parents room, the petticoat being around both and she brought him down in the same manner before daylight in the morning.

This Kuykendall, I was told, always carried in his waist-coat pockets "devils' claws" instruments or rather weapons he could slip his fingers in and that could easily take off the whole side of a man's face at one claw. He was a terror to this people and although we left them holding their frolick, I afterwards understood that he was killed by some of the party at the close of the ball. Mason a few years afterwards with his sons and others formed a party and waylaid the road between Natchez and Tennessee and committed many daring robberies, and some murders if I recollect aright. An armed party was at length sent against him and killed some and dispersed and broke up the band. I was informed that many boats had been robbed by the Red Bank people and many persons swindled out of their cargoes and as there was no law there, they would add insult to injury by laughing at the credulity of the dupes.⁵⁸ This short sketch will afford a picture of human nature where the society is unrestrained and without the control of religious principle, or the regulations of civil polity, where the strongest tyrannizes over others, until the weaker combine and assassinate, usurp the rule and tyrannize in turn, where there is no security even for life, nor no redress for injury, where man knows not the meaning of the sacred name friend in reality, nor the enjoyments of social life.

11th We came to Green river about 10 o'clock & each got an armful of wood sufficient to bear our clothes & gun secured by a vine which we held in our mouths & drew after us swimming the river Mr Overly was now of opinion that we was a great way up the river above where the road crossed that lead to Vienna That we were of course now between the road & the river & could not go wrong We accordingly took the course he advised occasionally looking at the compass & at about 3 o'clock P. M. came to the Ohio at the hurricane island⁵⁹ a few miles below the yellow banks we immediately knew where we were—broke Mr Overly of his commission as pilot we came to the Yellow banks & lodged & got some victuals to take with us

⁵⁸ Cf. Cumings, *Western Tour*, p. 243.

⁵⁹ i. e. Little Hurricane Island. Hurricane Island proper is about 120 miles further down the river.

12th Started for Hardings [Hardin's] settlement It was unknown by the people here or ourselves whether any white person had ever been through before us— We kept up the river to the mouth of yellow creek & then travelled due East & came thro' a pretty country today the land rich well watered & well timbered

13th Travelled E. by S. over poor land rather broken & brushy timber oaks ashes hickories & chestnut & Game very plenty Started a large gang of Buffalo today but could not get in sight of them—on passing a tree whereon were three cubs a very large she bear attacked us quite abruptly our guns in so bad order from wet weather that not one went off The Bear made off in a few minutes & we could not get a shot at her as she kept round at some distance & the brush was very thick We killed the young ones & encamped to roast them.

14th Travelled due East through a very broken country discovered an Indian track where he had crossed our route just before us & came over a level extending about a mile to a precipice crossing our course at right angles—the rock projected a considerable distance over the level below which was about 100 feet from the top of the rocks We turned to the left & found a hollow & a hickory tree the limbs of which reached the top of the rock at this hollow We threw down our blankets & hooked the limbs of the tree to us & slid down with our guns The caves extended a considerable distance under these rocks where the rain had never wet the earth which was strongly impregnated with nitre. There was no water falling over these cliffs at this time, but had at times & which had washed fifteen feet deep from whence at this time issued beautiful rivulets of good water Came this day to Hardings [Hardin's] Station without altering our course

15th Travelled forty miles this day to Mr Van Metres the first settler in Severns valley. The first five miles was through woodland & the remainder of the way led through barrens full of sink holes the water courses running under ground In the middle of these barrens is the big spring It issues in a sink hole in a plain, 20 or 30 feet below the level of the plain, runs about 30 yards to a subterranean passage between this sink hole & another; the passage is about 5 feet in height & fifteen in breadth & tolerable smooth & regular & about 20 yards in length; The stream is about 12 feet wide & half a leg deep very cold & runs with a rapid current It then runs considerable fall about 100 yards & sinks amongst broken & irregular rocks. One solitary

oak stands near this spring as if to invite the weary traveller to rest under its refreshing shade We fired at a deer on these plains & there being nothing to reverberate the sound or afford an echo the report was similar to a rap on a shingle.

16th We left Mr Overly, crossed one branch of Salt river & came to the Long lick

17th Crossed Salt river came by Bullits lick & to Major Wilsons plantation near Manns lick where we rested three days & Mrs Wilson purchased a horse for the Contractors which she sent by us & on which we carried our luggage & one rode alternately

21st We travelled through a fine country & came to Mr Tylers on the waters of Bashears creek in Shelby County.

22nd Came to Kentucky river & lodged at an old acquaintance Mr Brian opposite Frankfort

23rd Came to Georgetown & fell in with a party of pack-horses purchased for the Contractors & got each one to ride by leading one; came about eight miles further & encamped

24th Came to Littles on dry ridge

25th Got to Allison William's on Bank lick creek

26th Arrived at Cincinnati & received the news of the defeat of a detachment of our troops at Fort recovery (where Gen. St. Clair was defeated) and that the brave Major Mc Mahon Capt Hartshorn, Lieut Craig & Cornet Torry with 17 men were killed⁶⁰

28th I started with a drove of Cattle for Greenville, where my brother was who I wished to see; & went this day to Fort Hamilton

29th Let our Cattle graize in the Great prairie

30th Came to Fort St. Clair

31st To Greenville. I found my brother in good health & the works at Greenville entirely altered A Citadel was built where the laboratory was formerly & the stores all moved except three

August 2nd 1794 Six of us left Greenville & came three miles past Fort Jefferson on our return

3rd passed St. Clair & Hamilton & lay at Charles Bruces below Hamilton

4th Arrived at Cincinnati & was attacked with the bloody flux with which I lay low until about the last of this month when after paying my board doctors bill & for some necessary clothing

⁶⁰ Cf. *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 487-489.

I had one dollar left, & was so weak I could just make shift to walk

20th August. On this day the victory was gained by General Wayne over the Indians at the rapids of Miami of the Lake Had I got home from Massac a few days sooner & not had the late spell of sickness I should have been with the spies on this campagne some of whom had come for ammunition to Cincinnati as I arrived & strongly solicited me, but my feet were almost worn out as well as my clothes they had to return on foot & I was neither prepared nor able to stand the journey.⁶¹

On the 6th of September⁶² there was several droves of Cattle arriving from Kentucky for the winters provision for the army I feared that I would not have strength to perform laborious service during the winter. I was out of money & if I did not go with these Cattle I knew of nothing I would be able to do. I fancied I should be able to ride if I could get a horse that travelled smoothly & although my friends insisted that I was unable to go I went to the Compting house & offered to engage The Clerks were hiring the best hands at twelve dollars per month & would give me no more whereupon I went to the house where I found Mr Elliot Mr Williams & Major Wilson I told them that I had been long in their employ that many hands remained at their charge while sick & were continued at the same wages for which they had engaged—that I should have been out at the outpost at fifteen dollars had I not been taken sick—I had remained at home on my own expenses & was now ready to enter their service & thought it not unreasonable to get the same wages which those whom I left in the service received & which I had heretofore received they readily agreed to it & I got me a good horse & went with a drove to Mill Creek

On the 7th Some of our hands returned to Cincinnati & others took the drove out to graize I was so indisposed as to be unable to stir & was permitted to keep camp

On the 8th Another drove had arrived last night & I had become so far recruited by resting yesterday that I was able to ride & we took our drove to Fort Hamilton on the ninth we took our cattle out about a mile to graze I was barely able to ride this distance. The weather was pleasant & I lay in the shade all day—having formed a line of Centinels on the ride

⁶¹ Cf. *American State Papers, Indiana Affairs, I*, 491–2.

⁶² Brief extracts from the Memoirs, Sept. 6, 1796—April 26, 1797 are printed in the *American Pioneer, II*, 294–96.

from the river we easily kept the drove within We continued here until the 21st by which time we had received additional droves & I had become able to perform my duty without being very much fatigued We took about 400 bullocks to Fort recovery where we arrived on the evening of the 24th & met Major Price with his select corps of mounted volunteers who had been sent to hurry on some beef & I took charge of 120 bullocks & started with him on the morning of the 25th & on the evening of the 27th arrived at Camp⁶³ & found the army without beef or salt

On the 29th the remainder of the drove got in, 331 in number & I was left with nine men to take charge of them until the 10th of October when another drove of cattle & sheep got in The army eat 10 beeves per day issued regularly in rations & the Kentucky militia destroyed at some times about as many more⁶⁴ This gave our party considerable trouble & occasioned some hard swearing of General Wayne to the great terror of the Commissary

Oct 12th The Kentucky Volunteers left Head quarters I suppose gratified with the prospect of seeing their homes & their friends & their absence was not regretted by me

About this time my horse had been stolen & I could get no other but one badly abused & broken down with a miserable sore back which I took great pains to heal & for that purpose kept something to it during the days covered with my blanket Our provisions were frequently stolen & we left to fast a day at a time I had not yet gained my strength & was very peevish & irritable I had considerable share of Misanthropy & one morning I had fixed my blanket on my horse & began to entertain hopes that I should be able to ride home & was just starting with the drove to graze when the rascal broke loose run down the line & crossed the Miami [Maumee] I run my best but could not get him The river was deep I was warm & thought it imprudent to wade it. I felt as sure as possible that my blanket & surcingle was already gone I fancied that this was a rascally world that an honest man had no business in it, that without sharp elbowing no man could get through life & I determined for the future to

⁶³ This was the camp, to which General Wayne and the Army had moved, at the junction of the St. Joseph's and the St. Mary's Rivers to form the Maumee. *American Pioneer, I*, 353.

⁶⁴ There were about 2,600 in Wayne's army, with an additional 1,600 Kentucky volunteers under General Scott. *American State Papers, Military Affairs, I*, 360.

fight my way like others with force of hand I resolved on remunerating myself for my own losses from anything of value that fortune & opportunity should throw in my way without respect to persons I borrowed a horse & went in pursuit of mine I had got a mile or two down, on the opposite side of the river when a fine black gelding was following me with a collar & buckle & dressed leather tug halter on I stopped & took it off in part for my surcingle & had seen a new bridle laying near where a horse was grazing in some bushes near the river I thought of driving the horse off to a little distance & if no person noticed it should conclude the owner was out of sight & would take the bridle—however when I returned I saw the man—when I came to the bridle I could not find my horse & returned

After a short time one of the spies who knew my horse found him & brought him to me with the blanket & surcingle all safe. I had then no excuse for taking the neck halter I had no account to place it to. I was unable to return it for I knew not to whom it belonged. I wore it constantly on my horse in hopes the owner would at some time see & challenge it, that I might restore it but no person ever claimed it & I fortunately kept it for several years I never suffered so much in mind by any circumstance of that nature, nor received a lesson of more importance or that I felt more.

On the 27th the Fort was finished & called Fort Wayne four or five companies marched into it & we fixed the cannon & small arms on that occasion & in token of our success in the late victory over the enemy & in taking possession of their Country The residue of the army then on the same day marched for winters quarters & took General Harmars⁶⁵ old trace up the St Marys

On the 30th The army being at a short distance from Fort Adams⁶⁶ I took six beeves & three sheep & delivered them to the Commandant We encamped at Kettle or Gerty's town⁶⁷ 55 miles from Fort Wayne & 36 from Greenville

⁶⁵ Gen. Harmar in 1790, marched by way of Loramie's Store, across the portage and then down the St. Mary's to its junction with the St. Joseph's. Randall & Ryan, *Hist. of Ohio. II, 514.*

⁶⁶ Fort Adams was a small stockade on the south bank of the St. Mary's River, in Mercer Co. *Hist. of Van Wert and Mercer Counties, p. 87.*

⁶⁷ Girty's Town was the trading station established by James Girty on the St. Mary's River at the present town of St. Mary's, Auglaize Co. Butterfield, *Hist. of the Girty's, p. 289.*

31st Waited for the arrival of packhorses & drew provision
Nov 1st Came on Hartshorns road within sixteen miles of Greenville

2nd Arrived at Greenville & lay there the 3rd & 4th & on the 5th the packhorses were ordered to Fort Hamilton & came in with them & arrived on the 7th at Cincinnati

The whisky run boys or insurgents from Fayette Washington Westmorland & Allegany the four western Counties of Pennsylvania were arriving at this time Daniel Bradford⁶⁸ the principal leader in the Western insurrection was said to have passed alone in a canoe—twenty five came down in a ferryboat

Nov 9th I started with another drove for Greenville & got back on the 16th

Dec. 6th Went with another drove as far as Whites Station on Mill creek & on the next day to Fort Hamilton where I continued until the 17th here another drove joined us & we took them to Greenville & got back to Cincinnati on the 21st & settled with the Contractor on the 27th

On the 17th instant Israel Ludlow laid out a town at Fort Hamilton & it was first called Fairfield⁶⁹

January 5th 1795 I entered into partnership with my brother in law Jerom Holt I made sugar cleared ten acres of ground for Captain John Schooly on Mill creek & we were in partnership with Mr Schooly in a wagon & team of six oxen which Holt drove in the Quarter masters employ from Fort Washington to the outposts I worked hard & had about as much when we quit as when we began & lived poor & was very econimical

On the 3rd day of August the Treaty was held at Greenville between General Wayne & the Indians on the North of the Territory & the lands were ceded to the United States from old Fort Laurence [Laurens] to Lorimiers [Loramie's] Store to Recovery & thence to the Ohio opposite the mouth of Kentucky river with sundry reservations On this day I engaged to write in the Recorders office for Capt George Gordon Register of Hamilton County—near the last of this month his excellency Gov St. Clair & the honorable John Cleves Symmes left this place

⁶⁸ Doubtless David Bradford is meant. Bradford was one of the fugitives who had taken part in the Whiskey Insurrection and fled down the Ohio upon the approach of the army. Brackenridge, *Western Insurrection*, p. 326; *Centinel of North-western Territory*, Dec. 13, 1794.

⁶⁹ The name of this settlement was soon changed to Hamilton.

on a circuit to the Illinois I had very little to do in the office & as the opportunity offered I embraced it to see the country north on Madriver & between the Miamias Gov. St. Clair Gen Wilkinson Jonathan Dayton⁷⁰ Speaker of the house of representatives in Congress & Israel Ludlow on the 20th of August (only 17 days after the Treaty) had contracted with Judge Symmes to make settlements one at the mouth of Madriver, & one on the little miami in the seventh range, in consequence of which he relinquished his claim to them The Surveyors set off on the 21st of September Mr Daniel C Cooper to survey & mark a road⁷¹ & cut some of the brush & Captain John Dunlap to run the boundaries of their purchase which was the seventh & eighth ranges east of Madriver. I went with Dunlap. There was several stations by this time on Mill creek I think they were as follows Ludlows, Whites, Tuckers Voorheis's & Cunninghams the last was eleven miles from Cincinnati We came to Voorheis's & encamped

In the morning Mr Cooper & his party proceeded with the road & our party took Harmars old trace⁷² in company with a Mr Bedell⁷³ who had a wagon with provision & tools & was going to make a settlement a considerable distance in advance of the frontier which was afterwards called Bedells station & lay a few miles West of where Lebanon now is

23rd Sept. We run from the N. W. corner of Mr Bedills section four miles East thence 2 miles North to the line between the 3rd & 4th ranges of townships which had been run by Capt Dunlap in 1788

24th run 9½ miles North through level land, not very well timbered & very brushy.

25th made our 18th post on our meridianal line which was on the South boundary of the 7th range⁷⁴ & run thence one mile

⁷⁰ Johnathan Dayton, one of the 24 associates interested in the Miami Purchase, had been influential in securing the grant. Albach, *Annals of the West*, p. 481; Appleton's Cyclopedias, II, 113.

⁷¹ Cf. Steele, *Early Dayton*, pp. 29-30.

⁷² i. e., the route followed by Gen. Harmar in 1790, up Mill Creek Valley, and across the ridge a little to the south of Lebanon, and on to the Little Miami. Cf. Jones, *Fort Washington*, pp. 28-30.

⁷³ Wm. Bedle settled in Warren County. *Hist. of Warren County, Ohio*, p. 434.

⁷⁴ The term range is used here and elsewhere by Van Cleve to indicate an east and west tier of townships, rather than a north and south division, as in the Seven Ranges. Hough & Bourne, *Map of Ohio*, 1815; Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 17.

& a few chains West to the Great Miami river running at this place nearly South

26th This morning our horse was missing he had been well secured We hunted for him all day but never found him & supposed the Indians had stolen him. It was very rainy this day.

27th We carried our luggage up the mouth of Madriver about 30 rods up Madriver we found a camp of six Wyandott Indians We were a little alarmed at each other at first but they behaved very friendly They gave us some venison jerk & we in turn gave them a little flour & tobacco & several other small articlēs I exchanged a large knife, scabbard & belt that I had carried for several years for a less valuable one to one Indian & he gave me his with a wosted belt & a deer skin to boot, we had not been here long until Mr Cooper & his party arrived

28th Some Kentucky men who had come with Mr Cooper to view the Country went up Madriver & found the weeds so high & so many vines that they could not see the land & became dis-couraged & returned to Kentucky Mr Cooper returned to make some alterations in his road & we meandered a short distance from the nouth of Madriver down the Miami

29th finished meandering the Miami to our West line & commenced at the 18 mile post on our meridional line & ran East three miles on the South boundary of the seventh range & North of the sixth

30th run to Big beaver creek which we took for the Little Miami & found the distance from our meridional line 9 miles & ten chains

Oct 1st Commenced at our last mile post & run North 9½ miles through some fine prairies & good woodland & encamped on a handsome creek afterwards called muddy run a little above where Mercer afterwards erected a Station & where Fairfield has since been laid out.⁷⁵

2nd Struck Madriver running nearly West at 10 miles & seventy chains We sent our packhorseman & hunter William Gahagan & Jonathan Mercer the former of whom was the hunter to cook at the mouth of Muddy run against we got there but we had to make two miles & a half easting to get one mile & ten chains North to the Northern boundary of the eighth range & to meander all that distance again down so that it took us all

⁷⁵ Johnathan Mercer came from Virginia. The allusion of course is to Fairfield in Greene County. Dills, *Hist. of Greene County*, pp. 709-710, 719; Robinson, *Hist. of Greene Co.*, p. 243.

day nearly to get to them & when we found them some Indians had robbed them of the most of our provision & menaced their lives

3rd We continued meandering down the East side & prairies laying to our left It rained very hard & the Surveyor got his paper all wet & was about stopping We had about a pound of meat & though nearly done our business were thinking of setting off for home I undertook to keep the field notes & fell on the expedient of taking them down on tables of wood with the point of my knife so that I could understand them & take it off again on paper .

4th meandered to the mouth & eat our meat & then set off in a hurry for home, went 7 miles to Holes creek

5th Came to Cunninghams 34 miles fasting & got a large pot of mush & milk at John Clawsons & we all made a hearty meal on it

6th Arrived at Cincinnati & wrote for some time again in the Registers office and went again to Madriver about the first of November On the 4th Israel Ludlow laid off the Town at the Mouth of Madriver & called it Dayton for one of the proprietors a lottery was held & I drew lots for myself & several others & engaged to become a settler in the ensuing Spring⁷⁶

April 1st 1796 Landed at Dayton after a passage of ten days Wm Gahagan & myself had come with Thomson⁷⁷ & Mc Clures families in a large pirogue.

During the preceding winter two or three settlers had arrived here—several families had settled Holes Station where Miamisburg now is—a few persons had settled at the big prarie two on Clear creek on our road & several were scattered about the Country lower down. This spring a Settlement was made by Jonathan Mercer 8 miles up Mad river one at the forks called Chribbs' Station one at the Mouth of Honey Creek & one at the old Piqua on the Miami⁷⁸

I raised a very good crop of corn this year & in August took the ague severely & did not get able to labor until Spring I received my pay for my possessions In Cincinnati which I had sold

⁷⁶ Beside an inlot and outlot, each settler was entitled to purchase 160 acres at about \$1.13 per acre, Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 21.

⁷⁷ Samuel Thompson, who was accompanied by his family, had married Catherine Van Cleve, Benjamin's mother. Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 23.

⁷⁸ Old Piqua probably refers to Pickawillany. For the exact site Cf. *Ohio Arch. & Hist. Society Publications*, XVII, 1-29; Hanna, *Wilderness Trail*, I, 146-147.

—thro' my indisposition & other misfortunes & the high price of provision & labor I sunk the price of my lots my corn was mostly destroyed & I was about forty dollars in debt I gave eighty dollars for a yoke of oxen one of them was shot twenty dollars for a cow & she died flour cost me nine dollars a barrl & corn meal one dollar a bushel at Cincinnati & other articles in proportion & the transportation to Dayton was two dollars & a half per hundred weight

When I came to Dayton it was my intention to settle myself permanently & for this purpose I had paid my address to Sarah Lawson Kemper second daughter of the Reverend James Kemper near Cincinnati⁷⁹ She was a worthy girl, but my circumstances were now so changed, & my prospects of supporting a family so gloomy that I was compelled to abandon my favorite anticipations of happiness This adventure facilitated an acquaintance between me & her cousins the Kempers who afterwards figured in the affairs of West Florida⁸⁰ a correspondence between Reuben & myself continued for some time Major Doyle under whose command I descended the river to Massac had retired from service & was now living at Cincinnati & had intimated to Mr Kemper that he believed I was an enemy to him The story that gave rise to his impressions is as follows When we descended the river the boats were numbered as I have before stated & we were ordered to keep our places⁸¹ Ours was heavily loaded & weak in hands so that when rowing we could not keep up & when we drifted we out went them We ought perhaps to have made a proper representation to him of these circumstances at the time but he had sustained the character of being haughty arbitrary & imperious & was called King Doyle when he commanded the post at Hamilton so we thought it would be of no use & we kept the current at night which took us sometimes ten miles ahead against morning It would then take the other boats with hard rowing half the day to overtake us The men by this time would be pretty much fatigued & we could manage very well to keep our place until night We generally received a hearty volley of execrations for our disobedience of

⁷⁹ For Rev. James Kemper, the first clergyman to settle permanently in Cincinnati, Cf. Greve, *Cincinnati*, I, 358–359.

⁸⁰ Reuben Kemper and his two brothers took part in several expeditions from Mississippi Territory against the Spanish in Louisiana. *Appleton's Cyclopedia*, III, 512.

⁸¹ Cf. p. 48.

his orders returned mild excuses & determined to repeat the offence Capt Guion had been arrested & sent back Lieut. Gregg was a poor tool & was not my friend Wilson the Commissary I had partially known when he was a very snotty-nosed boy & whilst he lived with his parents Old James & Margaret in Washington Pa. He (like most persons of narrow minds) was very much uplifted & bloated with self importance assumed the command over us & would have wished us to have waited on his person We of course despised him did our duty in our own boat & refused any other service. This occasioned him to make frequent complaints to the major on trivial occasions without having any real cause to censure us but which served to excite prejudices On the 26th June 1794 a number of men enlisted in Tennessee under officers commissioned by citizen Genet the French ambassador in the United States as they said having nothing to do had volunteered to escort some salt boats from the mouth of Tennessee to Nashville & thro' curiouosity had come down to see us—but perhaps their real object was to examine our force & posture of defence My companions were acquainted with one of the men—they solicited us to go up with them & although it was a circuitous route we concluded to take it believing it the safest & not knowing when another opportunity might offer Connor had a public rifle & went up to give it to the Major & inform him of our intention Wilson had already been complaining The Major cursed Connor struck him in the face & ordered him under Guard & at the same time ordered a Corporal & file of men to bring them damned rascals out of the boat to the Guard house The orders were given in our hearing The Corporal came with his guard into the boat & having been acquainted with me for some time delivered his order to me & as I discovered with some reluctance I was loth to submit to the power of Military tyrants strongly prejudiced against me & whose situation in fact prevented their being accountable for almost anything they might do I determined rather to risk my life—my plan was that if I saw myself near the Guard house to spring from them suddenly to a thicket within six rods of the Guard house, amongst the soldiery I knew I had some friends & I determined to risk their fire I further determined to have my arms with me to support & defend me on my way home which thro' a wilderness of several hundred miles I should then view as a light undertaking Mr Gahagan was engaged in putting on his mockasons or something that detained him & I seized the

moment of their delay to speak to the Major who was walking backward & forward on the top of the bank With my gun in one hand & tomahawk in the other, a knife eighteen inches long hanging pendant at my side dressed in a hunting frock breech cloth & leggins My countenance perhaps betraying some degree of excitement. I leaped out of the boat & with a very quick step almost ran up the bank to the Major I have no doubt that I looked like a savage The Major mistaking my object & intention was alarmed & had no time to call for assistance—as I approached near him he retreated & I believe had almost a mind to run—as I advanced near him he turned assuming a gentle voice & manner bid me Good morning I stopt & paid him the same compliment & asked him if he wanted me He observed that he understood we were going to leave him that his boat would go to the falls after Mrs Doyle which would afford us a better opportunity of getting home & would start in eight days that his party was weak & had hard service to perform—that we ought to stay until our boat was unloaded—that it had been customary for the troops to build store houses & assist in unloading but it was not their duty—that his troops were engaged in building a Fort & were unable to assist us as much as he would otherwise wish but that both his team & men should assist all in their power & if we were as far accomodating we would sometimes assist them I told him our instructions from the Contractor Mr Elliot were to return by the first opportunity if it should offer as soon as we had made our boat fast, that we thought we were obeying his instructions & had known of no other opportunity likely to offer, that it was always my wish to perform my duty for the interest of my employers to the utmost of my power I owned that his boat would afford us a more direct & safer passage & that I was perfectly willing to stay & had no objection against assisting occasionally about their works at least as much as he should assist us in unloading— By this time Mr Gahagan was asscending the bank under the guard The Major bid the Corporal to let the men go & discharge the one at the Guard house. I performed my promise & so did he but we found the company of the soldiers disagreeable & left them at Red banks which I suppose induced him to believe I remained unfriendly to him I saw him soon after he had hinted his opinion to Mr Kemper & he introduced the subject An explanation took place & we parted on very friendly terms He informed me that at the time above alluded to he had information that

200 Indians were lying at Cape Girardieu soliciting the assent of the Spanish Commandant at that post to permit them to attack us.

On the 26th of April 1797 I moved to Little Beaver Creek about seven miles from Dayton & boarded with Joseph Mooney I raised a crop & the expense & profit of which is as follows

To two months labor myself.... pounds	7.10.00
Provision.....	6.00.00
Cooking & washing etc.....	3.07.06
To cash paid Isaac Mooney for work....	0.17.06
To ditto to Jos Mooney & Leachman fords	1.00.00

	pounds 18, 15.00
Received for the crop.....	1, 17.06

Net Loss	pounds 16, 17.06

This may shew the disadvantage of trusting business to disinterested persons & the necessity of our own attention to our business. On the 16th of October I engaged & started from Cincinnati with Israel Ludlow & William C. Schenck Surveyor to survey the United States Military lands between the upper parts of the Scioto & Muskingum rivers—our district was about forty miles square next Scioto I was two months & twelve days in this employ at half a dollar per day Our route was past Columbia & Newtown on the East fork of the Little Miami & thence to the falls of Paint Creek where we fell into Zanes' road⁸² from Wheeling to Limestone lately opened thence to Chillicothe another new town settled by a few persons in the spring previous thence the Indian path up the Scioto to the forks where Franklinton & Columbus now are We commenced our survey a little way above the forks The lands from the little Miami to Scioto is generally second rate mostly flat & wet On Paint & Scioto there are fine rich bottoms Our survey is mostly flat & wet & not well watered—on the North fork of Licking there is however some broken thin land well watered We discovered two salt springs On Whetstone & Allum Creek are many slate banks impregnated with allum & copperas & a kind of stone resembling iron when broke but containing so much

⁸² Cf. Gephart, *Transportation and Industrial Development in the Middle West*, pp. 48-49; *U. S. Statutes at Large*, 1789-1845, I, p. 357.

sulphur as to evaporate in smoke on a hot fire. We had a deep snow covered with crust the weather was cold & still so that we could kill but little game & were 29 days without bread & nearly all that time without salt & sometimes very little to eat. We were five days seven in company on four meals & they except the last scanty they consisted of a turkey two young raccoons & the last day some rabbits & venison which we got from some Indians. At the Forks of Scioto our company parted & Capt Abia Martin & Capt John Brown whose daughter afterwards married General Pike⁸³ & myself steered Westward for Dayton. We came to Buck Creek above where Springfield now is, having travelled as we suppose about 45 miles through a prairie country.

1798 Feby 13th I commenced the study of Surveying at Cincinnati & boarded at Capt Benhams & was promised a district in the United States lands by Israel Ludlow who had the power of filling blank commissions from the Surveyor General but who as on a former occasion never fulfilled his engagement—after I had got through my studies I assisted Avery in his Tavern during the sitting of the Court for some time, afterwards I posted Books for several persons, paid one visit to Madriver & in the fore part of July wrote a short time in the Quarter Masters office in Fort Washington. During this time Gen Wilkinson moved out with the Garrison & he sailed for Natchez Capt Shaumburgh for Fort Massac & left Sergaent Ambrose Whitlock (who was soon after promoted) & four or five soldiers. I had been waiting all summer to get my job of Surveying & was dissapointed & put off from time to time I was now put off until the first frosts should commence when I was to go with Mr Ludlow to begin at Lorimiers [Loramie's] Store so I concluded to return to Dayton & on my arrival there dug a pit for a saw mill for Mr Cooper & had a fit of sickness I suppose I caught cold from profuse perspiration in so cold & damp a place as I dug My sinews were swoled & drawn up as in the Cramp I had a high fever & when I began to recover a little took the pleuricy which near finished me

1799 I had been obliged by necessity to sell my preemption rights to our lands & by which I was enabled to purchase a creature I rented some ground at Dayton & raised an excellent crop of corn boarding in the meantime with my brother in law

⁸³ i. e. General Zebulon Montgomery Pike, the famous Western explorer.
Torrence Papers, Box 18, Nos. 72 and 74 in Coll. of Hist. & Phil. Soc. of Ohio.

Jerom Holt On the 1st of Sept I commenced teaching a small school⁸⁴ I had reserved time to gather my corn & kept school until the 1st of October I got my corn in the first week in Nov Through the recommendation of my uncle⁸⁵ who was a representative for Hamilton County in the first Territorial Legislature under the second grade of Territorial Government I was written to by John Reily Esq.⁸⁶ Clerk of the house of representatives to come down to Cincinnati & assist him I wrote with him until the assembly adjourned which was a few days before Christmas On the 2nd of March in this year Congress passed the first preemption law granting preemptions to purchasers & settlers between the Miami rivers who had contracted with John Cleves Symmes & his associates It provided that they should lay in their claims with the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States or the Surveyor General pay one third of the purchase money in hand & the other in two equal annual instalments, but three or four persons entered their land under this law.⁸⁷ In July & August the Indians were counciling & evinced an unfriendly disposition The British & French among them had made them dissatisfied with the cession of their lands & with the boundaries Block houses were built at Dayton & all through the Country & the people became considerably alarmed. I returned to Dayton & kept school about three months longer

At the late Session of Legislature an act was passed by the Council & house of representatives dividing Hamilton Co. into four The Governor denied that the legislature had the power & the act was negatived by him At the close of the session an adulatory adress was formed to John Adams Pres of the U. States⁸⁸ by members who in a short time after assumed to be leading democrats & thorough going Jeffersonians which was so filled with flattery (by Peter Pindar⁸⁹ called Oil of fool & on

⁸⁴ This was the first school held in Dayton. Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 34.

⁸⁵ i. e. Robert Benham. Cf. Greve, *Cincinnati*, I, 318.

⁸⁶ For John Reiley, Cf. McBride, *Pioneer Biog.* I, 1-105.

⁸⁷ This law was necessary, inasmuch as Symmes paid for 248,540 acres only of the 1,000,000 he had contracted for, and titles under Dayton Purchase had becomes void. Treat, *National Land System*, p. 54; *U. S. Statutes at Large*, 1789-1845, Vol. I, pp. 728-729.

⁸⁸ Van Cleve's estimate of the address is rather exaggerated. It was merely a straightforward statement of loyalty and of confidence in President Adams personally. *Journal, Representatives, Northwest Territory*, I, 159, 183.

⁸⁹ The reference is to Peter Pindar's *Pindaria* or *Peter's Portfolio*, published in 1794. Sabin, *Bibliotheca Americana*, XV, 131.

this occasion called Bears oil) that it was opposed by the staunchest federalists I did not understand at this time sufficient of the political controversies in our own republic to form an opinion of them . I had never made politics my study further than this, that the evil dispositions of men made Governments & laws necessary that power was delegated to men possessing passions & prejudices & liable to imposition ambitious & fond of power. That all public officers are public servants, that they ought to be supported, but the people ought ever to be jealous & watchful of their rights & oppose the encroachments of power & usurpation I always felt at least for the persecuted & remarking the shifting & sycophancy at the time of Mr Jeffersons elevation to the Presidency perhaps induced me to rank among the Federalists—but I have never supported either men or measures because they were of this or that party & indeed I have always been averse to every man who is warm or violent of any party, believing that party measures are destructive of the general good

1800 This year I raised a crop of corn & determined on settling myself & having a home & accordingly on the 28th of August married Mary Whitten daughter of John Whitten near Dayton⁹⁰ She was young lively industrious & ingenuous My property was a horse creature & a few farming utensils & her father gave her a few household or kitchen utensils so that we could make shift to cook our provision, a bed, a cow & heifer, a ewe & two lambs, a sow & pigs & a saddle & spinning wheel I had corn & vegetables growing. So that if we were not rich, we had sufficient for our immediate wants & we were content & happy.

I engaged to write for Mr Reily again this year The Legislature met at Chillicothe on Scioto I put up my corn & set off for Chillicothe on the 2nd of November & arrived there on the 4th The assembly convened on the 3rd & set until the 9th of December when the Governors term of office expired No other appointment had arrived & it was the General opinion that the ordinance would not authorize the Secretary to act in this & that of course it was an interregnum The Governor adjourned the Legislature on the 9th Previous to this his Excellency appointed me Surveyor for Hamilton County I came on the 11th to Mr Lintons at the round praire on Deer Creek being the upper settlement from whence it was 45 miles to the first settlement

⁹⁰ For the descendants of Benjamin Van Cleve and Mary Whitten, Cf. Steele, *Early Dayton*, p. 58.

near the little Miami—on the 12th it was very stormy & I did not leave there. On the 13th I left there & found the travelling very bad, made about 30 miles against sunset & endeavoured to strike fire but could not effect it & pushed forward. I got to the settlement a little before day & had my feet badly frozen Arrived at home on the 15th

1801 This year I planted corn in the bottom opposite Dayton & afterwards took in the returns of taxable property in Dayton Township which was all the Miami Country from the fifth range upwards The number of free males 21 years old & upwards within the Township extending between the Miamies & to the heads of the waters of Madriver & the Miamies was between the rivers 382 West of the Great Miami 28 & east of the Little Miami under 20 A petition was presented to the Governor praying for a new County to be erected from Dayton & a part of Franklin township to which I obtained the signatures It recommended Dayton for the seat of Justice & I recommended for Justices of Common Pleas & Quarter Sessions Daniel C Cooper John Paul & Backus—Prothonotary John Reily of Cincinnati—Sheriff James Miller Esq. or William Maxwell, Coroner Benjamin Chambers—Judge of Probate John Paul Justices of the peace Abel Crawford & Nathaniel Gerard & I solicited the office of County Surveyor for the New County (which Office I held for the old)⁹¹

The land offices were opened this year for the sale of the public lands under the late laws of Congress—at Cincinnati in April—at Chillicothe in May—and at Marietta in June. At last session a new law was passed for the benefit of the purchasers & settlers under Symmes & his associates & commissioners appointed to sit at Cincinnati to examine the claims & issue Certificates⁹² It is proper to observe that neither under the former nor this law the proprietors under Symmes for the 7th & 8th ranges viz Dayton Ludlow St. Clair & Wilkinson laid their claim Mr Ludlow who was one of the proprietors & agent for them informed me that they relinquished their claim on account of the rising price that he could not afford to give two dollars per acre & he made this known to the Commissioners (William Goforth James Findlay & John Reily) as well as to the settlers & aided them in supporting their claims I had sold my

⁹¹ As Montgomery County was not organized until May 1, 1803, these recommendations were not carried out.

⁹² Cf. p. 64, note 87.

preemption rights to out land conditioned that 8s 4d per acre should be the price as the proprietors were bound to me & now took it back & laid my claims & got Certificates for 160 acres & some lots in Dayton for which I afterwards obtained the patents

On the fourth Monday of November (23rd) the General assembly met at Chillicothe & continued until the 23rd of January 1802 I wrote this session for Mr Reily clerk of the House of Representatives Governor St. Clair had been reappointed Governor & Thomas Jefferson now President of the United States

1802 In the latter part of January I returned from Chillicothe by the way of Williamsburgh & Lebanon Mr Lytle⁹³ whilst at the Legislature had politely offered me a copy of the Connections of Surveys in the Virginia Military district next the Little Miami (he having been a deputy Surveyor for Surveying & locating the warrants in that district & as I held the office of County Surveyor I was unable to lay off the lands sold for taxes without them) I copied the plats in one or two days & started for home There had been a deep fall of snow which was beginning to dissolve with heavy rains before I got to Williamsburgh & made the travelling very bad After I left there the flats were covered with water sometimes to the saddle skirts the creek full & having had neither air nor excercise & being confined to a close room during the winter & with the exposure in such very bad weather & travelling I caught a violent cold I had been in the habit during the winter of leaning against the edge of a table whilst writing until it became sore My cold seemed to settle there in my stomach & right side raising into my breast My stomach seemed to lose the power of digestion when my food reached a certain stage of fermentation it threw me into the most violent pain The process of digestion seemed not to proceed further & I have up to this time (1820) had my annual returns of the disorder continuing during the cold weather. It is perhaps a dyspepsia.

Before Mr McMillan set off as a Delegate to Congress he had asked my advice respecting establishing the Surveys of the Miami Count[r]ly knowing that I was as well acquainted with them as any other person The persons below the sixth range had settled agreeable to the monumented corners on the lines

⁹³ Wm. Lytle, a major-general in the War of 1812, and a well known citizen of Cincinnati. Cf. *Quarterly I*, 3.

run North from the Military or third range No east & west lines had been run & the lines running North having been run by different Surveyors by the time they reached the sixth range some mile posts were about half a mile further North than others the variance decreasing Southward to the Military range from whence they began Yet the people had invariable settled by these monuments Mr Ludlow as agent for the Proprietors under Symmes for the seventh & eighth range had had a standard line run from the third to the sixth range & then run the south boundary of their purchase from his eighteen mile post which cut off in some instances near three fourths of a mile & mostly half a mile from the upper tier of sections in the sixth range He had from this boundary so regulated, commenced his survey of the seventh & eighth ranges & run it into sections. The Surveys of all the lands North were regulated again by his, so that had the Surveys been corrected by the Standard line, many of the purchasers below the seventh range would have lost their improvements wherever the improvements had been made in the northern part of their sections quarters etc, and if these old lines had been established & the Surveys of the upper County had been regulated by them all above the sixth range would have fell on different tracts Agreeably to my representation Mr McMillan had the preemption law so drafted that the monumented corners on the old lines were established South of Ludlows line at the South boundary of the seventh range and the residue was to be surveyed as would best accomodate the purchasers⁹⁴ I think I was here instrumental in doing a great service to a very considerable part of the settlers of this country.

I had last fall surveyed the Township North of Vevay near the mouth of Kentucky river for Major Chambers (who was U. States deputy Surveyor) into half sections—had assisted him in making his plats & copying his field notes. I also copied the field notes for several townships for Mr Cooper This spring I was obliged by a law of the State passed for that purpose to assist in running the lines between Hamilton Clermont & Ross Counties I met with Roger W. Warring Esq County Surveyor of Clermont County & run the line between the two first. The law required Col. Elias Langham Surveyor of Ross to give notice to the Surveyors of Adams, Clermont & Hamilton of the time & place to meet him He surveyed the lines between Ross

⁹⁴ Cf. *U. S. Statutes at Large, 1789-1845, Vol. II, p. 114.*

& the other Counties first & had sent notice to me to meet him at Vanmeters on a certain day but he had finished his other lines sooner than he expected & had proceeded on the line between Hamilton & Ross leaving word for me if I came to follow him, but hoping to get through to the settlement on the Little Miami & sending to me in time for me to meet him there As he had so considerable a job he had to provide himself with horses to carry provisions & luggage & had wrote for me to come on foot & bring nothing but my instruments as it would be difficult keeping unnecessary horses at that season When I arrived at Vanmeters he had been gone some days—supposing he might wait at the Little Miami I hurried through on his line wading most part of the way & the next day came home in a snow storm These trips laid me up with my complaint for some time again

I had put up a Cabbin on my quarter section adjoining Dayton & felt no disposition to interfere with public affairs nor had I thoughts of any office If my health would have permitted I should have Labored hard at Clearing ground & beginning to farm, but I was unable to work most part of this summer & necessity forced me out to survey some I found the whole country in a ferment The Scioto people on the passage of the law in the Legislature assenting to a division of the Territory into two States by the Scioto river⁹⁵ had become so exasperated as to raise a mob & committed some excesses & had put every man that could possibly act, under requisition to ride with petitions throughout the State praying Congress to admit us to a State Government & almost every person except some about Cincinnati had signed them Every act of the Governors life public or private was villified His appointments found fault with His arbitrary conduct censured where he had negatived laws which he thought did not come within the province of the Legislature such as the division & making of new counties which he contended the ordinance vested in him etc. There were many office hunters who were crying out against everything in the present order—against all officers their acts their salaries or their fees Our taxes we could not complain of as the greater part of the expenses of Government was paid by the General Government but it was agreed that some how or other we were in a state of vassalage & iron bondage & that it would make better times & we should enjoy so much liberty

⁹⁵ Burnet, *Notes, Chs. XVII & XVIII; Laws of Northwest Territory, Vol. 3, pp. 130-32.*

On the other hand it was contended by a few that the expenses of Government at present was nothing that when we came to have a Convention Legislature a Governor Secretary Judges etc. our share of revenue for the support of the General Government all to pay our burdens would be so far increased as to be oppressive— The Virginia Military district was settling fast & they had contended that Congress had unconstitutionally prohibited slavery within that district particularly the slaves being part of their families inherited from their ancestors or raised by themselves by motives of attachment as well as their habits & interest they could not part with them or live without them—that Congress might as well in justice rob them of their lands for which they had fought & bled as to render it of little value to them On the score of interest to the Territory they said that on admission of slavery it would induce so many of the wealthy Kentuckians & Virginians that with this flood of migration our Country would be immediately settled & with men of fortune that would by the accession of wealth in the State make the State rich General Posey⁹⁶ & many men of influence from the slave States had waited on our Territorial Legislatures & had pressed the subject endeavoring to influence them so far as to agree to an alteration in the ordinance for the Government of the Territory but without effect It was known that there were many in the Scioto Country strongly in favor of the admission of Slavery & a law was at one time near passing the Council & house of representatives in favor of slavery under the specious name of Servitude Many had brought slaves over taking indentures on them from seven to twenty years & generally until they would be worn out & be only fit to become charges to the Townships These things influenced a few to oppose entering into a State Government for fear lest the slaves interest which they supposed had taken the lead would preponderate & lest in our infant situation our revenue should prove unequal to the expenditures of the Government.

There was however a strong party in favor of going into a State Government partly because the popular current would force us there & contended for the right (if Congress would not

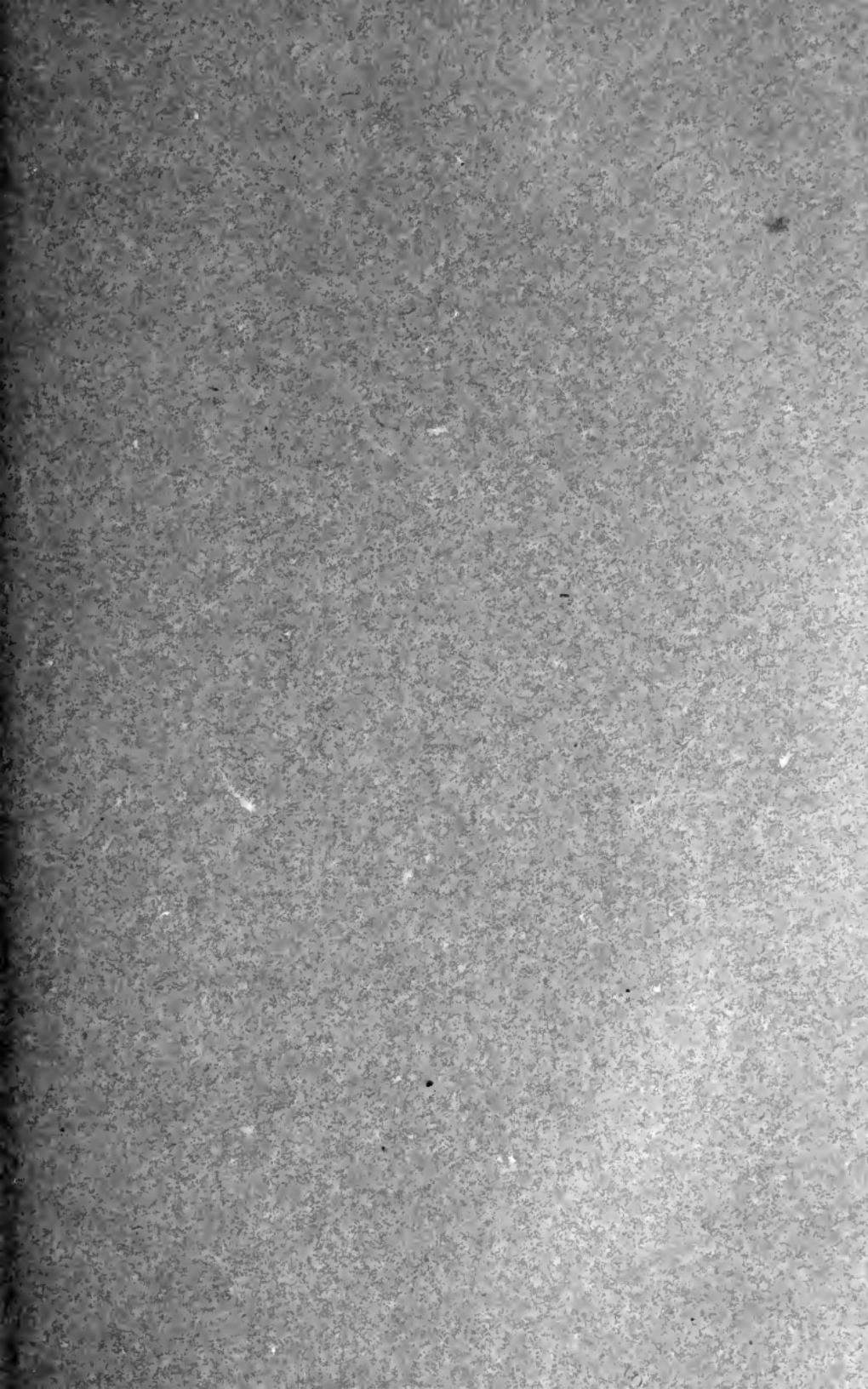
⁹⁶ Gen. Thomas Posey, a native of Virginia and later Governor of Indiana Territory, was living in Kentucky at this time. Drake, *Dictionary of American Biog.*, p. 732. For the several attempts during the session of 1799 to introduce a modified form of slavery into the Northwest Territory, Cf. *Journal, Representatives, Northwest Territory, Vol. I*, pp. 100-01, 108, 117, 139-40.

agree to the alteration of the ordinance agreeable to the law of last Session of the Legislature) of going into a State Government with 20,000 free inhabitants & by State lines north from the Great Kenhawa [Kanawaha] & the falls of Ohio which Congress had by their Ordinance of April 23rd 1784 pledged themselves to stand to as articles of compact & fundamental constitutions between the Original States & the people & States in the Territory to be formed unalterable after the sale of any part of the Territory but by consent of the United States & such new State—that Clarks regiment had made choice of their 150,000 acres & had settled Clarksville in 1786 at the lower boundary of the second State & that locations had been made in the Virginia Military district all before the Ordinance of July 1787 That it was true the State of Virginia had given her sanctions to that Ordinance but the people of the Territory who were a party never had—that therefore we being possessed of the stipulated numbers mentioned in the former ordinance as appeared by the showing of Congress from the late Census our wardship had expired & we ought to assert our rights Several publications appeared in the papers setting forth the views of Individuals perhaps the best essays were six numbers over the signature of Frank Stubblefield in the Western Spy attributed to Mr McMillan⁹⁷

In order to consult for the public good, we called a meeting at Dayton. Isaac Spining, Esq. was chosen chairman and myself Clerk. I had drafted a miserable ungrammatical and lengthy piece and had it published and was induced to stand as candidate for a member of the Convention. In order that I might be prepared to act should I have been elected, I drafted a constitution, which is added hereunto in note "D" in the appendix, altho' I should not be pleased with several parts too theoretical, I would like it as well as the one we got.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ These essays, of which only five were published, opposed statehood, chiefly upon the ground that the proposed change was inexpedient and that the enabling act was illegal. *Western Spy, July 31—August 8, 1802.*

⁹⁸ Cf. Foreword, p. 6.



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